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as she had lived, her mind unclouded, her last action
an effort to make the sign of Redemption, and her
last breath a prayer.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I offer you my heart and soul.
Jesus, Mary, Joseph, assist me in my last agony.
Jesus, Mary, Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul
in peace with you.

"Eternal rest grant to her O Lord,
And let perpetual light shine upon her.
May she rest in peace. Amen."—300 days' Indulgence.

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MAY - 4 1955

In loving memory of my dear mother
Mrs Harriet T. Madden who
started this book early, & was
well & constantly guided by its
spirit & teachings. R. T. P.



Thomas More Madden M.D
55 Merrion Square Dublin





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THE

ARDENT LOVER OF JESUS;

OR

THE SOUL ELEVATED TO JESUS

IN THE

Adorable Sacrament:

WITH

A DEVOUT METHOD OF HEARING MASS
CONFORMABLY TO THE MYSTERIES OF HIS
SACRED PASSION.



SECOND EDITION, REVISED BY THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY KEATING AND BROWN,
38, Duke-street, Grosvenor-square.

1820:

Of your charity pray for the repose of the soul of



MRS. HARRIET MADDEN,

Relict of the late Dr R. R. Madden, author of many works
and formerly Colonial Secretary of Western Australia.

The twenty-first and last surviving child of the late
John Elmslie Esq., of Berners St. London, and
Surge Island, Jamaica. Born in London,
August 1801; married at Cheltenham
1828; Converted to the Catholic
Faith in Cuba in 1837; died
at Booterstown, Dublin,
the 7th of February,
1888.

On whose soul Sweet Jesus have mercy! Amen.

A woman of rare intellectual culture and mental endowments that endured unimpaired to the end of life; a devoted and good wife; a most unselfish and untiringly loving mother; of un murmuring resignation to the Holy Will of God in all the bereavements and trials with which it pleased Him to visit her; most charitable and generous to all but herself; scrupulously unfailing in the performance of every duty of life, she died as she had lived, her mind unclouded, her last action an effort to make the sign of Redemption, and her last breath a prayer.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I offer you my heart and soul.
Jesus, Mary, Joseph, assist me in my last agony.
Jesus, Mary, Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul
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"Eternal rest grant to her O Lord,
And let perpetual light shine upon her.
May she rest in peace. Amen."—300 days' Indulgence.

*Thomas Moore Madden, M.D.
Dublin & Trieste 1902*

APPROBATION.

W.R. 14 v. 25
 HAVING perused a Manuscript, called *The Ardent Lover of Jesus, or the Soul Elevated to Jesus in the Adorable Sacrament, with a Devout Method of Hearing Mass, conformably to the Mysteries of his Sacred Passion*, I have not found any thing contrary to the Doctrine of the Catholic Church, or the sentiments of the Holy Fathers and other pious writers. On the contrary, I have recognized therein an abundant and apposite application of passages from Holy Scripture, and the inflamed affections of a St. Teresa and a Thomas of Jesus.* Should there be sufficient encouragement from the Catholic Public for committing this work to the press, I make no doubt of its proving equally acceptable and beneficial to the Ardent Lovers of Jesus, in the Mysteries of his Holy Passion and his Adorable Sacrament.

✠ JOHN MILNER, Bp. of Castab. V. A.
 Wolverhampton, Jan. 29, 1818.

* The venerable author of the work entitled, "The Sufferings of Jesus."

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TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY,
and her glorious Spouse ST. JOSEPH.

O AMIABLE Mother of God! animated with the most lively confidence in thy maternal tenderness, and penetrated with gratitude for the many favours I have already received through thy powerful intercession, I come to offer thee a book which is solely intended to extend the empire of HIM whom thou so ardently lovest. O Queen of the seraphim! sacred Victim of love's purest flame! thou knowest what it is to love, for thy mortal life was an uninterrupted exercise of all that is most sublime in the heavenly virtue of divine charity,—thy death was an effect of its sweet violence,—and thy pure soul, for eternity, will never cease to glow with such transports as are reserved to thyself alone.—Ah! can it be possible that thy heart, so loving and so beloved, could be insensible to the misery and blindness of those who live strangers to the divine consolations that spring from the exercise of perfect charity? No; though thou hast no experimental knowledge of their misfortunes, yet thy compassion for their misery is proportioned to thy zeal for the glory of thy

divine Son.—Thou art happily aware of the infinite treasures of mercy and grace hidden in the cross and passion of a Man God :—thou knowest more clearly than the most enlightened spirits, how worthy of unbounded love is the supremely adorable mystery, wherein the memory of that passion is renewed ; and which, alas ! though sovereignly amiable, is too generally abandoned.—O thou, whose influence is boundless over the heart of thy Son, remedy, I beseech thee, so great an evil ; take under thy special protection this little book, and by the powerful assistance of that interior grace which thou canst without difficulty procure from the Source of all grace, promote thyself the end for which it is written, since that end is also the object dearest to thy own fervent heart.

And thou, O glorious St. Joseph ! whose hidden and perfect life on earth, so faithfully imitated that of thy Creator in the Sacrament of his love, obtain that the altar and the cross may become the continual object of adoration and love to all those who read this book, and that they may be so sincerely devoted to the sacred passion and mystical death of their Saviour, as to obtain an abundant share in the blessings purchased by both.

METHOD OF HEARING MASS,

CONFORMABLY TO

THE MYSTERIES OF THE PASSION.

THE following prayers have been expressly arranged to facilitate the most perfect method of assisting at the adorable Sacrifice of the Altar. As they comprise the detail of our divine Redeemer's sufferings, they have necessarily exceeded the usual length of prayers for mass. It may not therefore be useless to remind those, who adopt the form here prescribed, that it is not at all requisite to run through the entire. A single stage of the passion may often suffice to occupy the mind, and enkindle the various affections of faith, divine love, compassion and confidence;—whenever this is the case, and the pious reader happily inclined rather to mental than vocal prayer, devotion should not be restrained, but full scope given to the feelings of the heart, always preferable to verbal forms.

A Prayer before Mass.

O DIVINE JESUS! *only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth!* (St. John i. 14.) sacred Host and Victim of our sins! Lamb without spot, whose precious

blood has abundantly flowed for the redemption of mankind ! O infinitely merciful Redeemer, to what excessive lengths hast thou carried the incomprehensible love of thy adorable heart, in favour of wretched sinners ! Not content, O Love of my soul ! with offering thyself on the cross a bloody sacrifice for our transgressions, thou daily immolatest thyself, the unbloody victim of thy own love, on our altars. In this adorable sacrifice, (the invention of thy ineffable charity,) thou renewest in a real, tho' mystical manner, the life-giving sacrifice once offered on Mount Calvary, and appliest to our souls the superabundant graces then purchased for us. O give me, my Lord and sovereign Good ! give me, through the merits of the sufferings I am about to commemorate, those sentiments of faith, hope, lively and ardent love, gratitude and contrition, which should fill my soul in contemplating thy torments—and teach me, O Master of eternal truth ! to render to thy Father, by thee, and with thee, the homage I owe to his adorable Majesty—teach me to satisfy for my innumerable offences—to acknowledge the inestimable blessings I daily receive—and to draw on myself and all mankind, the graces and benefits most necessary for salvation.

AT THE CONFITEOR.

The Agony of Jesus in the Garden.

O LAMB of God! the never-ending delight of the blessed! I throw myself at thy divine feet, and overwhelmed as thou art with anguish and sorrow, I acknowledge and adore thee as the joy of heaven; the support of the weak; the divine strength and sweet hope of all who suffer for, or with thee. O heart of my Redeemer, penetrated with fear, sorrow, and mortal anguish! why dost thou refuse to thyself one ray of those divine consolations, of which thou art to all others an exhaustless source? Ah! it is for my love,—it is to teach me the enormity of my offences,—it is to shew me the insufficiency of my contrition, and to supply for all that is wanting therein. O my adorable Love! prostrate then on that earth, which is now profusely moistened with thy life-giving blood, permit me to join my regrets to the deadly anguish which fills thy soul. O how can I exist when I reflect that I am the cause of thy torments? why do I not expire with grief at the view of thy mortal agony? But, my most merciful, most afflicted Jesus! I see, that thou wilt not

the death of a sinner ; (*Ezech. xviii. 32.*) that thou art about to purchase my life by the sacrifice of thy own ; that thou desirest nothing more ardently than to see me profit of thy sufferings, live by thy death, be rejoiced by thy sadness, strengthened by thy weakness, exalted by thy humiliation, and enlivened by thy depression. O let me then begin at this moment to correspond with thy mercy ; with thy love, for it was the foresight of my ungrateful abuse thereof which wounded thy tender heart. O wash my soul in that adorable blood which streams with such abundance ; ah ! it is dearer to me now than in any other stage of thy bitter passion, for it now flows solely from an effort of the purest, the most ardent love ; whereas on other occasions inhuman cruelty and malice will be thy executioners. O Love ! invisible agent in the cruel catastrophe of my Redeemer's passion ! let me learn from thee to detest with unbounded horror those enormities, which he now bitterly deplores ; teach me, after sinning against my Saviour, to rejoice in suffering with him, and never to desire or seek for consolation, but in that divine heart which for my sake was *sorrowful even unto death.* (*St. Mark xiv. 34.*) Adorable Treasure of my soul ! I ask but the grace to love thee

ardently and perseveringly; to be in all things submissively, joyfully resigned to thy divine will; and to be in future preserved from the misfortune of offending thee, by the least wilful infidelity. O my God! let me never more feel the bitter anguish which springs from sin; *let that chalice pass from me*, (St. Matt. xxvi. 39.) I most earnestly conjure thee, but in all things else I say from the bottom of my soul, *not my will but thine be done*. (St. Luke xxii. 42.)

AT THE KYRIE ELEISON.

The Seizure of our divine Lord in the Garden of Olives.

Thou preparest now, O adorable Jesus! to drink that chalice destined for thee by the decrees of thy eternal Father. Betrayed by him whom thou hadst cherished, whom thou hadst chosen to be the companion of thy labours, the partaker of thy treasures, the witness of thy miracles, thou art about to be led like an innocent lamb to the slaughter, (*Isa. liii. 7.*) to be delivered into the hands of sinners. Ah! *whereto are they come with swords and clubs?* (St. Matt. xxvi. 50, 47.) Senseless as they are they seek to confine that immensity which

fills the universe, to restrain that omnipotence which no power can resist, to bind those divine hands which support the heavens, to destroy him who had healed their sick, enlightened their blind, and raised their dead. They see not in thee *the Redeemer of Israel*, (Isa. xlix. 7.) *the Desire of the everlasting hills*, (Gen. xlix. 26.) *the mighty One of Jacob*. (Isa. xlix. 26.) O beloved of my soul! thou art now bound, but not by exterior force. The willing captive of thy own infinite love, thou art in chains only that thy children may be released from bondage, that they may be delivered from the galling yoke of iniquity, and freed from the never-ending pains of hell. But, my divine Lord! they need not come to seek thee; pressed by thy *exceeding charity*, (Eph. ii. 4.) thou anticipatest their approach, thou goest forward to surrender thyself a willing victim for my transgressions. Thou consentest to be bound, that thou mayest burst every tie which attaches us to sin; and in embracing even the traitor Judas, thou receivest to thy arms, in his person, all sinners who have unhappily strayed from, and betrayed thee. O God! who art rich in mercy, (ibid.) have mercy on me, the most wretched of all, *have mercy on me according to that great mercy,*

(Ps. l. 3.) which causes thee to embrace my miseries, to wear my chains, and become *the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people.* (Ps. xxi. 7.) O if thou hast broken my bonds, by thy efficacious captivity, why am I still enslaved? why, my adorable Liberator! why do I value any thing but thee? why do I acknowledge any master but thyself! O sacred bonds! sufficiently powerful to captivate a God! I earnestly desire no other liberty than that which is found in thee. O Beloved of my soul! I deserve not the happiness, the honour of being thy slave, or of suffering for thy love; yet, I conjure thee, by *the bowels of thy mercy,* (St. Luke i. 78.) to bind me so indissolubly to thee, in the chains of the most ardent love, that neither *tribulation, nor distress, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor danger, nor persecution, nor the sword* may separate me from thy charity, (Rom. viii. 36.) or interrupt for a moment my union with thee, my strength! my life! my Redeemer and only Good!

AT THE EPISTLE.

The Sufferings of our divine Lord during the Night of his Passion.

O eternal Justice! how is it possible that thou condescendest to appear as a criminal

before those whom thou knowest are about to fill up the measure of their iniquities by declaring thee worthy of death? Art thou not He who has received all power in heaven and on earth? He, by whom the princes of this world are already judged? He, who will come in great power and majesty to render to all men according to their works? Yes, my God, thou art; and yet meek, silent, resigned, and submissive thou standest before those iniquitous judges whose eternal destiny is in thy hands—thou remainest *dumb* in their presence, *as a lamb before his shearer*. (Isa. liii. 7.) O silence of Jesus! visible triumph of innocence! admirable effort of divine patience! adorable miracle of boundless love! when shall I imitate thee? when shall I embrace with delight contempt and abjection? when shall I rejoice at being *accounted worthy to suffer reproach for thy adorable name*, (Acts vi. 41.) instead of seeking excuses for sin in that fund of pride where they usually originate? O adorable Model of sublime perfection, destroy in me this vain, groundless apprehension of human censure, and let me not be so blind, so miserable as to esteem that which thou hast despised. But, my God! my Mercy! my sovereign Lord! permit me to prostrate at

thy feet, and to deplore with the bitterest anguish, the cruel insults thou now receivest.—Ah! who is the wretch that dares to strike that divine face which is the light of the heavenly Jerusalem, the joy of the blessed, the seat of every adorable charm? Who is he that veils that lovely countenance after which the angels sigh? Alas! for my sake, thou art *afflicted and humbled exceedingly*, thou art *become miserable, and bowed down even to the end*. (Ps. xxxvii. 9, 7.) O eternal love of my soul! hide me in the secret of that divine face, which for my redemption thou didst not turn away from those who rebuked thee, and spit upon thee; (*Isa. l. 6.*) shew me that sacred face which has now neither *beauty, nor comeliness*—that face which is, *as it were hidden and despised, whereupon they esteemed thee not*, (*Ibid. liii. 2, 3.*); shew it to me, and I shall be saved, for, my adorable treasure! I know thee, I love thee;—disfigured as thou art, I acknowledge thee, as *my Lord and my God*. Though insultingly veiled, as well by thy love, as by the cruelty of thy persecutors, yet thou beholdest me, and *all things are naked and open to thy divine eyes*. (*Heb. iv. 13.*) Thou art like a jealous spouse who *standeth behind*

the wall, looking through the lattices, (Cant. ii. 9.) and seest without being seen. O my dear and Sovereign Love! through thy profound humiliation, I conjure thee, open my eyes to my own nothingness and misery, and deign to cover them so closely with the bandage of love, that they may be for ever shut to every object but thee—that I may be justified by thy calumniation, and healed by thy wounds:—that I may see thee, know thee, love thee in all creatures, and deplore, with thy penitent Apostle, for the rest of my life, the misfortune of having denied and offended thee.

AT THE GOSPEL.

Jesus mocked and derided at the Court of Herod.

I now see, O divine Lord! how vain, contemptible, and worthless is the esteem of men, since, even by the rulers of Israel, by those *professing themselves wise*, (Rom. i. 22.) thou art despised and insulted. O increated Word! I feel that *the wisdom of this world is foolishness with thee*, (1 Cor. iii. 19.) that there is no true greatness but in being contemned and humbled for thy sake.

Ah ! how deep, how universal, how inveterate, must have been the wounds inflicted on our souls by pride, since to heal them it was necessary thou shouldst be treated as an imaginary king, thy heavenly doctrine regarded as folly, and thy adorable person cloathed in a robe of ignominy and derision. O how clearly do I now see the great opposition between my pride and thy humility, my impatience and thy meekness, my indocility and thy obedience. O eternal Truth ! despised for my sake, *give me understanding and I will search thy law, and I will keep it with my whole heart.* (Ps. cxviii. 34.) Thy enemies, animated with infernal fury, are determined on destroying the only hope of their salvation ; but the more thou art condemned, the more dear thou art to me ; — *thy words* are despised, but I will hide them *in my heart, that I may not sin against thee.* (Ibid. 11.) *Shew me then, my adorable Guide ! shew me thy ways, and teach me thy paths, direct me in thy truth, for thou art God, my Saviour.* (Ps. xxiv. 4, 5.) — Thou art my sovereign Love, and only Good, and *tho' all men shall be scandalized in thee, I will never, with the assistance of thy grace, be scandalized.* (St. Matt. xxvi. 43.) I am

ready to go with thee both into prison, and to death. (St. Luke xxii. 33.)

AT THE OFFERTORY.

Jesus cruelly Scourged.

O my God! O victim of such prodigious love as is beyond expression! why dost thou deliver thyself up to the power of the wicked? why dost thou submit to a torment which is far above thy natural strength, and which thy omnipotence alone could enable thee to survive. O innocent Lamb! will not the cruel sacrifice which is to terminate thy sacred life, satisfy that love which consumes thy adorable heart, and which is truly stronger than death, and more jealous than hell. (*Cant. viii. 6.*) But I see that thou art *ready for scourges*, and that my sins, the true cause of thy sorrow, is continually before thee, (*Ps. xxxvii. 18.*)—thou alone knowest the enormity of our offences, and thou hast offered thyself to expiate them, therefore *the Lord hath laid on thee the iniquity of us all.* (*Isa. liii. 6.*)—Eternal God! Majesty of heaven and earth! *it is I, I am he that have sinned; I have done wickedly; let thy hand, I beseech thee, be turned against me,* (*2 Kings xxiv. 17.*)—*I know*

that for my sake this great tempest is upon him, (Jon. i. 2.) that for my iniquities thou hast struck him and reputed him with the wicked, (Isa. liii. 8, 12.) ; O take me then, and cast me into the sea ! (Jon. i. 12.) into that ocean of blood, which streams in torrents from the mangled body of my suffering Jesus, who is now, as it were, a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. (Isa. liii. 4.) O let me be healed by his bruises ; let his sacred blood sprinkle me, and I shall be cleansed ; let it wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. (Ps. l. 9.)

And thou, O most adorable Jesus ! the true friend and Saviour of my soul, on whom is now *the chastisement of my peace!* (Isa. liii. 5.) how shall I thank thee ? how shall I testify my ardent, fervent desire to partake in thy pangs, and, above all, to burn with that love which consumes thy too merciful heart ? O my Saviour ! my Redeemer ! my only Sovereign Love ! who will grant me my desire of dying for thee ? (2 Kings xviii. 33.) *Who will give water to my head, and a fountain of tears to my eyes, that I may weep day and night, (Jer. ix. 1.) and refuse to be comforted ? Who will pierce my heart with such wounds as may ever bleed afresh at the recollection*

of thy cruel sufferings ? O divine Love of my soul, art thou not now satisfied ? Is not this the baptism with which thou wert to be baptized, and for which thy soul so passionately sighed ? (*St. Luke* xii. 50.) Is not this the remedy prepared from all eternity in the designs of thy love, for the miseries of thy servants ? O that all sinners would now approach this pillar, to which love has bound their Redeemer, and lay all their offences at his sacred feet, to be for ever drowned in the redeeming streams which flow for their expiation ! O that they would all draw near, wash their robes, and make them white in the blood of this divine Lamb ! (*Apoc.* vii. 14.) Ah ! my Lord ! teach all, I conjure thee, to profit of thy unspeakable mercy—that *mercy which is magnified even to the heavens*, (*Ps.* lvi. 11.) ; and as for myself, dearest Jesus ! (myself the most guilty, the most ungrateful of all sinners), the only favour I ask is, that thou wilt imprint on my heart so lively a sense of the torments thou hast suffered in this stage of thy passion, that I may unceasingly and sincerely lament and detest those sins which have caused thy pangs.

AT THE LAVABO.

Jesus crowned with Thorns.

Alas ! my God, my Saviour ! when will human cruelty towards thee have a term, or rather, when will thy infinite love be fully satiated ? Must thou be *examined by new outrages and tortures, that we may know thy meekness and try thy patience ?* (Wis. ii. 19.) Hast thou not already sufficiently proved thy love for man to be a consuming fire ? *for what then shall they strike thee any more ?*—Alas ! *thy whole head is sick, and thy whole heart is sad.* (Isa. i. 5.) O Monarch of heaven ! King of my soul ! Leader of Israel ! I adore thee crowned with this wreath of ignominy and torture. I prostrate before thee, and acknowledge thee as the true King of my heart, the Ruler and Master of the universe. O my omnipotent and most merciful Jesus ! how thou art humbled to destroy my pride ! how thou art tormented to remove my repugnance to the salutary bitterness of suffering and humiliation !—Alas ! divine Love, shall I never share in thy flames, or be animated, as thou art, with love for the cross ? O King of my soul ! enter into thy own empire, already a thousand times thy conquest ;

reign therein, O Thou who *dweldest in the holy place, the praise of Israel*, (Ps. xxi. 4.), and may I never seek any friend or master but thee. Banish from my soul the tyrannical passions which have hitherto usurped the empire of thy love ; do with me as thou wilt, for I am *the work of thy hands*, (Job. x. 3.)—receive me in thy mercy, defend me by thy power, enrich me by thy love, *quicken me in thy justice*, (Ps. cxviii. 40.), and let thy mercy also come upon me, O King of my soul ! that I may always keep thy law for ever and ever.

AT THE ORATE FRATRES.

The Ecce Homo.

O Redeemer of my soul, more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of the stars ! how art thou now disfigured, abject and despised ! O my God, *thou who hast put on praise and beauty, and art clothed with light as with a garment*, (Ps. cii. 1—12.) art now bathed in blood, and covered with a robe of mock royalty. Thou who rulest over myriads of angelic spirits, and makest *thy ministers a burning fire*, (Ibid. 4.), now treadest *the wine-press alone, and of the Gentiles there is not a*

man with thee, (Isa. lxiii. 3.) Thy sacred head is crowned with a thorny band—thy adorable heart, which for my love hath expected reproach and misery, (Ps. lxviii. 21.) is now drowned in a sea of anguish and sorrow. Behold then, O my soul! behold the man, (St. John xix. 5.)—behold the Brightness of eternal light, the unspotted mirror of God's majesty, and the image of his goodness, (Wis. vii. 26.), become, for thy sake, the most abject of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity, (Isa. liii. 3.), a worm and no man, (Ps. xxi. 7.)—O why have they persecuted him whom love hath already smitten? why have they added to the grief of his wounds? (Ps. lxviii. 27.) But, Lord, the insults of men have not terminated with thy mortal life—wert thou capable of suffering on this altar, how often would thy heart be pierced, thy wounds opened anew by the ingratitude of those who assist at these awful mysteries. Change my heart at least, O my God, and grant that I may never approach this altar, without remembering thy sufferings with contrition and love.

AT THE PREFACE.

*The Jews demand with Clamours the
Death of Jesus.*

Thy time is near at hand, O Redeemer of the world! (*St. Matt.* xxvi. 18.) the hour for which thou hast so long sighed, is now fast approaching—thou art about to be led, like a lamb to the slaughter, (*Jer.* xi. 19.) to be immolated in the sight of heaven and earth, for the sins of the world. O my God! my eternal and adorable Love! it is not the anticipation of thy sacrifice, or of the cruel torments which still await thee, that now wounds thy soul, for thou wilt be offered only because it is thy will, (*Isa.* liii. 7.), and no man would have power over thee, were it not given him from above. But, O, how deeply is thy heart pierced by the blind obduracy of those for whom thou art going to die!—how sensibly dost thou now feel the flight of thy disciples, the denial of thy apostle, the iniquitous proceedings of thy judges,—the weak pusillanimity of Pilate,—and above all, the ingratitude of thy chosen people, whose reiterated cries and demands for thy death, now assail thy ears, and wound thy ever merciful heart,

O adorable, innocent Lamb ! what evil hast thou done ? Who can find cause of death in thee ? (*St. Luke* xxiii. 22.) Which of them can convict thee of sin ?—Yet still they persist in demanding the crucifixion of their Messiah—the death of Him by whom they live. Alas ! my Lord, have I not imitated the ingratitude I now so sincerely detest ?—how often have I crucified thee anew by my crimes, and even trampled, with the Jews, on thy adorable, superabundant merits ! Perhaps at this very moment those crimes, which thou didst expire to expiate, are, thro' my own obstinacy, essential obstacles to the application of thy merits in these adorable mysteries. O that I could protest with Pilate, that *I am innocent of the blood of this just man*, (*St. Matt.* xxvii. 24.)—of that precious *blood of the New Testament which was shed for many for the remission of sins*, (*Ibid.* xxvi. 28.) O divine Jesus, Beloved of my soul ! permit me to mingle my sighs with thy groans, and to water thy adorable feet with my tears ; permit me, penetrated with contrition and anguish, to exclaim, with feelings far different from those of the Jews,—Let thy blood be upon me, and on all those for whom it was shed. (*Ib.* xxvii. 25.) Let that blood, the hope of my

salvation, be on my heart, my soul, my understanding, my will,—let it mark me for ever in characters of mercy and love, which may preserve me from the sword of the exterminating angel, whom I have so often provoked thee to arm for my destruction. I well know, dearest Jesus ! that if thou wash me not, I shall have no part with thee, (*St. John* xiii. 8.) ; but I am equally convinced, that these divine mysteries, instituted to shew forth thy passion and death, can really, abundantly, and efficaciously, apply to my soul the infinite merits of thy adorable blood. Wash me, then, I conjure thee, in the redeeming streams which will soon flow on this altar, and destroy every obstacle to thy perfect reign in my heart.

THE CANON.

Jesus carries his Cross.

Thou now commencest, O divine Victim of our sins, the last and most painful journey of thy mortal life. Loaded with thy cross, overwhelmed with the far less supportable weight of our crimes, and exhausted by the torments thou hast already endured, thou ascendest the mountain of Calvary, to resign thy life in excessive

agony, and unexampled love. O my only happiness! my Father! my Model! my Redeemer! thou shalt not go alone—I will follow thee—I will walk in thy footsteps, sufficiently marked by the traces of thy blood, and if I cannot be so happy as to expire with the burning ardour which consumes thee, and give increased force to thy otherwise exhausted strength, I will contemplate and adore, in thy divine person, the wonderful effects of infinite love, infinite goodness, infinite compassion, and of mercy, which is truly above all thy works—which no crimes can tire, no outrages restrain, no bounds can limit, no enormities exhaust.—O Mercy! O Goodness! O Love! by what miracle of insensibility do I survive the sight of thy increasing pangs?—Alas! they have overwhelmed thee!---I see that thou art fallen under a load thou art too weak to support ---thy *strength is dried up*, (Ps. xxi. 16.)---thy *spirit hath fainted away*, (Ib. cxlii. 7.), prostrate on the earth, thou art on the point of offering a less agonizing sacrifice than thy love desires. O Lord! art thou not *he that giveth strength to the weary, and increased force and might to them that are not?* (Isa. xl. 29.) Why then art thou fallen, O Strength of the weak, and Sup-

port of the strong ?---It is love--love alone that now deprives thee of that force which it hitherto communicated to thy sacred humanity ;---it is love that has loaded thee with thy cross, that has supported thee thus far, and that now prompts thee to sink under its weight, that thou mayest afterwards be the divine strength, the support, the model, the heavenly comforter of all, who, struggling against the weakness of human nature, are generous enough to follow thee in the thorny paths of temptation and the cross.

O Lord and Love of my soul ! I now throw myself at thy feet, and with all the sincerity and ardour of my soul, I offer myself to assist thee in carrying thy cross. Ah ! how happy is he who is chosen to ease thee of thy exterior load---how dignified, how honourable is his situation ! But, Lord, thou hast, in his person, selected me also to accompany thee, to share thy sufferings, and to drink of thy chalice. Adorable Victim of love ! thou art *the way, the truth, and the life*, (St. John xiv. 6.) he that followeth thee, walketh not in darkness. Come then, my soul, let us lean on our beloved, (*Cant.* viii. 5.); *let us*, from this day forward, *walk in the light of the Lord*, (Isa. ii. 5.).---*Let us*

go, that we may die with him, (St. John xi. 16.)---Let us weep, not only over our suffering Lord, but over ourselves, our ingrati- tudes, and the offences of all man- kind. More sensible of our happiness than Simon of Cyrene, let us embrace, with de- light, the cross that has been sanctified by the blood of a God, and take the chalice of suffering and salvation, not only with resignation, but praising and blessing his sacred name.

AT THE ELEVATION.

The Crucifixion of our Divine Lord.

This is our Redeemer, whom infinite love once offered on the cross---whom in- finite charity now offers on the altar;--- whose glories are now veiled by frail forms of bread, as they once were by the humiliations and miseries incident to our weak nature. O my soul! dear bought purchase of a Saviour's blood! sinners, men of all descriptions, once children of wrath, but now raised to the adoption of the sons of God! *lift up your eyes on high, and behold your God, (Ibid. xl. 9, 26.)*; behold him who hath not committed sin, but has been made a propitiation for our offences,---behold the adorable agonizing

Victim of universal cruelty and divine justice---his sacred head resting on the hard wood of the cross, tortured anew by his thorny crown ;---his immaculate body suspended between heaven and earth, transfixed with immeasurable anguish ;---his life-giving blood gushing in torrents from every pore ;--his merciful heart pierced by as many darts as we have committed sins ;---his dying groans---his patience---his mercy---his love --- all, eloquently plead the cause for which he dies---the great cause of man's redemption. --- O let us all approach---let us witness the tragical scene---let us dwell on, and contemplate every circumstance thereof, that *we may all see and know, and consider, and understand, that the hand of inexorable justice and infinite love hath done this,* (Ibid. xli. 20.) ---O God of my heart ! how can I endure the thought, that for my offences thou art sacrificed---that by my hand thou art immolated---for me thou sleepest in sorrows ! (*Isa. l. 11.*) Ah ! adorable Spouse of my soul ! Spouse of blood ! (*Exod. iv. 25.*) what shall I say, and what can I answer thee, since I myself have done it ? Yet, nevertheless, O infinite Love ! why should I not hope in thee ? art thou not here, before my eyes,

the God, the hope of my salvation? Yes, I firmly believe thou art offered on this altar, as really as thou wert on that of Calvary, and that thou hast descended from thy immortal throne to apply to my soul the infinite merits of thy saving passion. This is therefore *the acceptable time*, (2 Cor. vi. 2.), the long-desired moment of mercy and compassion. Listen to my sighs, I conjure thee; let thy adorable blood stream on my guilty soul; let thy divine voice ascend to heaven in my favour: it is not less powerful, less persuasive now, than when it once implored our pardon on the cross: blot out my iniquities as a cloud, and my sins as a mist---receive me into thy extended arms, for thou hast redeemed me. (*Isa. xliv. 22.*)

AT THE SECOND CANON.

Jesus prays for his Enemies.

Thou art now present on this altar, O Master and Model of our souls! It is no less a chair of truth than the cross, whence thou teachest to thy children, and to all men, those sublime lessons of heavenly wisdom, self-denial, abjection, and love of the Cross, so little known, generally abhorred, and first practised so perfectly

by thyself. Hitherto, O my crucified Love! in the course of thy sacred passion thou hast held thy peace, thou hast kept silence, thou hast been patient, (*Isa. xlii. 14.*) ; but, O Lord, speak now, for thy servants hear—speak, and discover to us the feelings of thy divine heart in the midst of thy torments. Ah! thou art not silent; thy dying accents, thy bleeding wounds, eloquently implore mercy for all men, and first for those who most cruelly tormented thee. Thou art that book *written within and without*, (*Ezech. ii. 9.*), now exposed, and open to the universe, containing the divine science which thou hast descended from heaven to inculcate. *O who will grant me that thy words of eternal life may be written in my heart? who will grant me that they may be marked with my blood in the centre of my soul?* (*Job xix. 23.*) O my adorable Lord and beloved Master! thou hast prepared thy arrows, and made them hot in the furnace of thy love, (*Psa. vii. 14.*) ; deign then to penetrate my heart so deeply with that love, more piercing than any two-edged sword, that I may embrace, cherish, and delight in the cross, as my refuge, treasure, and only solid good. But, my divine Jesus! I know that on the cross thou wert a pub-

lie Victim, and that thou art no less so on
 this new Calvary—that thy precious blood
 was shed, not solely for one, but for many,
 to the remission of sins; nor is it less a
 universal remedy on this altar. Thou hast
 promised, when thou shouldest be raised
 up, to draw all things to thee, (*St. John* xii.
 32.); do I not behold thee here elevated in
 this sacred Host, raised up between heaven
 and earth to unite both. O if there be a
 heart here insensible to that tender cha-
 rity, which prompts thee thus daily and
 hourly to renew the great sacrifice by
 which we were redeemed, attract it to thee
 by those divine charms which the ignominy
 of the cross, or the sacramental veils, can-
 not hide from the eye of faith. Call to
 thee all who labour, that thou mayest re-
 fresh them; all who thirst, that they may
 now drink at the fountains of the Saviour,
 (*Isa.* xii. 3.)---all who are weary, that
 in thy sacred heart they may find rest---all
 who tremble at the rigours of divine jus-
 tice, that they may find shelter in the clefts
 of the rock, and confidently trust in that
 mercy, which now flows with thy blood on
 the children of men: let *the light of thy*
mercies (*Eccles.* xxxvi. 1.) shine on those
 souls who suffer in the flames of purgatory.
 O God of all! have mercy on all---*lift up*

thy hand over the strange nations, that they may see thy power; that they may know thee, as we also have known, that there is no God beside thee, O Lord. (Ibid. i. 3, 5.) Have mercy on the Church, O good Pastor! on the city thou hast sanctified, the city of thy rest;---and as for all unhappy sinners, who steel their hearts to the influence of thy grace, or who having been once saved by thee, have fallen off from their first fervour; who forgetful of thy sufferings, and thy love, offend thee anew; for all these, O my God, permit me to plead in thy own divine words, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* (St. Luke xxiii. 34.) But do thou enlighten them, O Saviour of men! touch their hearts as effectually as thou didst that of the good thief, and grant them, through the superabundant merits of thy bitter passion, a place with thee one day in paradise.

AT THE PATER NOSTER.

Jesus saith to his Mother, Woman, behold thy Son, and to St. John, Behold thy Mother.

O my beloved, crucified Lord! thy strength is now nearly exhausted—thy

sacred humanity, hitherto supported by omnipotence, will soon sink under accumulated sorrows. A little while, and we shall see thee no more—a little while, and thou shalt cease to suffer for, or from ungrateful men. But, O my God! most merciful and compassionate Creator! thou wilt not leave us orphans. During thy sacred life thou hast dignified us by the appellation of thy brethren, and hast given us a right to address, as our father, HIM, whose Word and Wisdom thou art. About to depart from this valley of tears, thou hast committed us to the care of HER, who is thy own beloved mother, the most perfect of thy creatures, a miracle of thy grace, and the constant companion and partner of thy sufferings. O discover to all men, adorable Jesus! the immense value of the blessing thou hast bestowed, in giving us such a mother, such a mediatrix, such an assured refuge in life and death!

And thou, O most sacred Virgin! Queen of martyrs! Model of the saints! and Admiration of the angels! *to whom shall I now liken thee, or to what can I compare thee?* Thy anguish is *great as the sea*, (Lam. ii. 13.)—thy sorrow is *above all sorrow*, (Jer. viii. 18.)—thy sacred heart, pierced with as many swords, as the body

of thy Son is covered with wounds, is fastened to the cross by the nails of the most ardent love, heroic patience, and unexampléd fortitude. O Mother of God ! thou art likewise my mother—my soul was committed to thy care by thy expiring Son ; look on me then with those eyes, which, drowned in tears of the bitterest anguish, witnessed every insult, and contemplated every wound received for my sake, by thy dearly beloved Son.---Receive me into those arms which embraced his mangled body, when taken from the cross ;---let me experience so powerfully the effect of thy intercession, that I may draw such abundant fruit from the adorable sacrifice at which I assist, that, in happiness or misery ---in consolation or trial, I may *do whatsoever he shall say to me*, (*St. John ii. 5.*) and implicitly follow the dictates of his holy law.

AT THE COMMUNION.

Jesus living on the Cross.

At length, adorable Victim ! after hours of silent anguish and sorrow I hear thee complain,---not of the torments thou endurest, nor of the unrelenting cruelty of thy enemies,---but of the burning thirst

which consumes thee. Lord! I well know that it is not so much natural thirst which torments thee, as thy desire, thy impetuous, ardent thirst for my salvation. Alas! there was once a time in which I ungratefully refused to grant thee the little I could give. O my God! I seek not to conceal from thee my wretchedness and misery;—*thou knowest my foolishness, and my offences are not hid from thee.* (Ps. lxxviii. 6.) ---In thy extreme thirst for my salvation, I gave thee, with the Jews, vinegar to drink; I offered thee nothing better than tepidity, indifference, and sloth. O that I could blot out those years with thy blood! O that I could efface their remembrance with my tears! If thou desirest my salvation, O Life of my soul! come thyself and effect it;—come, take possession of a soul which never deserved thy love, but which, notwithstanding, thou art dying to purchase. O come, Lord! my sovereign and only Happiness! descend from that cross, and enter my heart, though harder than the wood which sustains thee;—come, that thy tears may soften, that thy love inflame, and that thy blood may so penetrate my soul, that it may henceforth produce worthy fruits of contrition and repentance. Come; for though hidden from

those who surround thee, I most firmly believe thee to be Christ the Son of the living God. I hope in thee, without diffidence or reserve, and, O my God! should not my heart be insensible and hardened indeed, were not its affections solely, entirely thine. Yes, *Lord! thou knowest that I love thee*, (St. John xxi. 15.); but come thyself, for among all the gifts of heaven, and all the blessings of the earth, I desire but thee, and thee alone.

AT THE POST-COMMUNION AND LAST GOSPEL.

*The interior Sufferings and Death of
Jesus.*

When, O adorable Lord! when wilt thou pronounce thy sacrifice consummated? When wilt thou consider as perfectly accomplished the great work for which thou art clothed with our miseries, and expiring on a cross? O Love never satiated! when wilt thou cease to torment this divine Lamb, by removing the principal cause of his anguish, and subjecting to his amiable empire those cherished mortals for whom he dies? O Lord, *they have dug thy hands and feet, they have numbered all thy bones*, (Ps. xxi. 17, 18.): *from the sole of the foot unto the top of the head, there is*

no soundness in thy adorable body, (Isa. i. 6.) ; thy wounds and bruises are multiplied above the hairs of thy head, (Ibid.—Ps. lxxviii. 5.) and thy anguish is far beyond all human conception. Why then, my sovereign Happiness ! my beloved, crucified Saviour ! why wilt thou not depart from an ungrateful world, which thou hast already superabundantly redeemed ? Ah ! my God, thou wilt perfect thy work—thou wilt yet remain to teach thy followers how they are to support that interior anguish which is the most acute of all torments—how they are to bear the privation of all sensible consolation, and in the midst of affliction to hope against hope, (Rom. iv. 18.) and to lean upon God (Isa. l. 10.) even when he appears to forsake them. O adorable Victim ! which of those saints, purified in the crucible of interior desolation, or plunged in the waters of tribulation and anguish, could ever boast of having suffered like thee ? O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like unto the sorrow of Jesus, (Lam. i. 12.)—any agony like that which he endures—any affliction or humiliation wanted to complete the measure of the most excruciating sufferings.

O eternal God ! merciful, kind, compas-

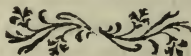
sionate Father ! why art thou unmindful of the adorable Object of thy complacency ? why hast thou forsaken him who is now abandoned by all ? — Alas ! he looks *for one that would grieve together with him, but there is none, and for one that would comfort him, and he can find none.* (*Ps. lxxviii. 21.*) Why then art thou far from him--- thou, the hope, the sovereign consolation of the afflicted ? — Ah ! my beloved Saviour, I know it is thou thyself that art become thy own executioner ; — thou hast plunged thy divine heart, inaccessible to exterior force or cruelty, into a sea of anguish ; --- thou art determined to drink even to the dregs the cup of divine wrath, that thy children may never drink it more. (*Isa. xli. 17, 22.*) O God of love ! let me not frustrate the designs of thy mercy ; may I, after thy example, be resigned to the salutary bitterness of interior desolation. Look on me now, I conjure thee, before thy divine eyes close in death, for I see thou art expiring---thy strength is spent ---thy precious blood, which *shall sprinkle many nations*, (*Ibid. lii. 15.*), now distils in lessening drops : — the increasing weight of thy adorable body enlarges thy wounds, and so multiplies thy pangs, that thou thyself proclaimest thy sacrifice consum-

mated,—thou recommendest thy divine soul into the hands of him who sent thee, ---and *full of grace and truth*, full of mercy, and consumed with love, thou expirest.---O Mercy! O Goodness! O infinite, boundless Love! how shall I thank thee? how shall I detest my sins, myself, and a world which has crucified its Saviour? O may I never delight but in thy cross---may I be insensible to every comfort but the solid joys that are found in privation and suffering--and may I prove my love and gratitude, by dying to self, and to all that could separate me from thee, my beloved Lord.

A Prayer after Mass.

O MY eternal Lover! my sovereign Beatitude! my divine, adorable Model! thou art at length *taken away from distress, and from judgment---who shall declare thy generation?* (Isa. liii. 8.) thou art now triumphant over sin and hell; thou hast *led captivity captive*, (Ps. lxxvii. 19.): the prodigies which accompany thy death, proclaim thy divinity, and announce thee to be truly the Son of God. O happiness of my soul! it is for me thou wert sacrificed; let me, at least, acknowledge thee

for what thou art—for my God, my Model, my Love, my All: let my heart, harder than the rocks, be rent with them; let me, with the dead who announce thy dissolution, rise from the sepulchre of sin; let my eyes be for ever rivetted on the image of thee, my crucified Lord, and may the remembrance of thy bitter passion so fill my heart, as to render all worldly pleasures hateful to my soul, and even imbitter, in seasons of trial, those human consolations which thy law allows, but which, for my sake, thou hast refused to taste. May I depart from this sanctuary penetrated, as were the witnesses of thy crucifixion, with anguish, admiration, gratitude, and love, and abundantly enriched with the merits of thy sacred passion. O give me a place in thy love-wounded heart---let me enter therein by the opening which a cruel spear has now made---let me remain therein, and may I no longer live, but Jesus live in me, *by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.* (Gal. vi. 14.)



REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS,

WHICH MAY SERVE AS ENTERTAINMENT IN
PRESENCE OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

I.

Jesus having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. St. John xiii. 1.

The love of God for man---the predilection of the Creator for his creature, surpasses all understanding, and is commensurate with eternity itself. *I have loved thee*, says he, by the mouth of one of his prophets, *with an everlasting love.* (Jer. xxxi. 3.) Jesus as God, consubstantial with the Father, has loved us in the beginning, he has loved us in time, he has loved us to the end; and has proved the solidity, the tenderness of his love, by the most adorable miracle which infinite wisdom could devise---by the most precious gift which infinite goodness, and boundless love could bestow. O of what are we composed, if this God of love, this infinitely amiable, and only worthy object of our love, be not beloved? How can we behold on our altars this divine Victim of

his own ardours, without being animated to love him to the end as he has loved us? Yet, great as are our obligations, we are incapable of loving our sovereign Benefactor independently of his divine assistance. Let us then approach this altar, the resting place, the dwelling of him who is the source, as well as the giver of *every perfect gift*, (James i. 17.) and while we deplore our coldness and infidelity, let us conjure him, by the love with which he has loved us, to fill our hearts with that sacred fire which he came, and remains on earth to enkindle, (*St. Luke* xii. 49.) and to render us the fervent and persevering adorers of this ever amiable mystery.

O sacred Victim of love! the eternal Lover of even those who love thee not! the divine Hope, and faithful Friend of those who serve thee! behold a soul who most earnestly desires to know thee as her only good, and to serve thee as her sovereign Lord!---behold her whom thou hast looked on from all eternity in the designs of thy mercy---whom thou hast chosen for one of thy own beloved flock---whom thou hast loved as such, and whose possession, support, and even nourishment thou art in this adorable sacrament. O beloved of my soul! pardon me then, if I address

thee with such confidence as thy love seems to authorize, and most powerfully attracts. It is not I who forget the immense distance between thy almighty greatness, and my contemptible nothingness---it is thou thyself who hast overlooked, in my favour, the prerogatives of infinite majesty, and, anxious only to obtain my love, hast declared that thy *delight is to be with the children of men*. (Prov. viii. 31.) O how true it is, that *having loved thy own who were in the world*, thou hast *loved them to the end*, and stretched thy love to such lengths as were never heard of until thou thyself hadst deigned to teach us how to love! O why will not all learn from thee the divine science of perfect love? why are not all convinced that should they even *speak with the tongues of men, and of angels, and have not charity*, they are but *as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal*? (1 Cor. xiii. 1.) For my part, O Life of my soul! confused and humbled at my past indifference, I now come, and consecrate myself irrevocably to thy love and service. I desire no other dignity, than that of a devoted adorer of this amiable mystery; no other support, than this bread of life; and no other happiness in this world, but that which is

found by those favoured souls who most fervently love thee. *Amen.*

II.

All you that thirst, come to the waters ; and you that have no money, make haste, buy, and eat ;---come ye, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.
Isa. lv. 1.

How many are there who sigh after that happiness which it is natural for the human heart to desire, yet who shall never be at rest because they seek for peace where it cannot be found---they pursue a phantom which eludes their grasp, and drink only of those muddy waters whose property is bitterness, whose effect is to disgust. And even among those who *hunger and thirst after justice*, (St. Matt. v. 6.), those who seek the Lord in the sincerity of an upright will, how few are there found who generously combat that self-love and self-seeking---that thirst for sensible consolation, which is the capital enemy of pure love ! How few are there who disdain to contaminate the heart which aspires to the sweet communication of the Divinity, with the poisoned and insipid draughts of human consolations, and human though innocent

joys! Yet, to those happy few, and to them alone, will the Lord impart those spiritual delights, which less resolute, less generous souls may desire, but shall never experience. Those alone *shall be inebriated with the plenty of his house, with the torrent of his pleasures*, (Ps. xxxv. 9.); they only shall drink so deeply of that *water springing up into everlasting life*, (St. John iv. 14.), that every consolation, every enjoyment which is not divine, will be rendered tasteless and burdensome. O that all men would now attend to the voice of their Redeemer! O that they would approach with humility, confidence, and love, to this throne of grace, where HE resides, who calls, who entreats, who anxiously desires to enrich them! Ah! why should we remain in a state of wretchedness and poverty, when, without difficulty, we may be filled with good things? Why will we faint with spiritual weakness, when this bread of heaven, this bread of life, which may be purchased without any price, is within our reach? Why will we die, when we have in the midst of us the principle of life? Ah! let us then approach, that we may be delighted in gladness, and be replenished with HIM who is the true bread descending from heaven, and giving life to our souls. (St. John vi.)

Adorable Jesus ! inexhaustible source of sweetness and delight ! thy divine voice, from the midst of this tabernacle, invites to thee all those who hunger and thirst, that thou mayest replenish them with the waters of life, and feed their souls with the manna of heaven. O my only Love ! I come on thy invitation ; I am one of those who have long sighed and thirsted after the divine peace which is not found in earthly delights, and is only enjoyed by those who have learned to despise them. O thou who *openest thy hand, and fillest every living creature with benediction !* (Ps. cxliv. 16.), send me not away fasting, lest I faint in the way. Assist me, for *the eyes of all hope in thee*, (Ibid. 15.) ; feed my soul which sighs for this bread of heaven, and give me of that *water springing up unto everlasting life*, that henceforward *I may not thirst* but for thee alone. (St. John iv. 14, 15.) But, Lord ! should not my spiritual poverty, my extreme wretchedness, deter me from presuming to approach thy altar, or from hoping to drink at the *fountains of the Saviour*, (Isa. xii. 3.), in union with those who are thy cherished friends, and favourite servants ? How shall I presume to solicit favours and graces which thou hast often granted, but of which I am now destitute, because I have

squandered and abused them? How shall I purchase treasures, who am and have nothing? Lord, in the sincerity of my heart I acknowledge that I deserve to be banished from this divine feast—to be deprived of this bread of heaven, which is only for those who have overcome the world. I deserve to suffer, without hopes of being refreshed, that mortal thirst which now consumes me, because thou wouldst long since have replenished my soul with the waters of life, had I sought but thee, and rejected, as I ought, every delight which is not found in thy love. Alas! I have spent the treasure of those graces, hitherto received, *for that which is not bread, and laboured for that which doth not, and cannot satisfy me.* (Isa. lv. 2.) O my adorable Love! and my only real Benefactor! wilt thou pardon me? wilt thou again receive, and strengthen me? Yes; I feel that thou wilt.—Thou hast not called to send me away empty.—I have deserved to be abandoned, yet I am notwithstanding a soul *sought after, and not forsaken.* (Ibid. lxii. 12.) O give me then that bread of life and salvation, which thou mercifully offerest without price, but which, though poor of myself, I can purchase with the infinite treasure of my

Saviour's merits : give me that *wine*, my sovereign Love ! *for which thou thyself hast laboured*, (Ibid. 8.), and may I drink it with such ardent love on earth, as will purchase for me the bliss of being inebriated with a torrent of delight for eternity.

III.

Let not your heart be dismayed, be not afraid, do not give back, fear ye them not, because the Lord your God is in the midst of you, and will fight for you against your enemies, to deliver you from danger. Deut. xx. 3, 4.

This consolatory promise was made by Moses, on the part of God, to the Israelites. We may justly consider the same as addressed to us ; for, though the Protector, and often the visible Leader of his chosen people, yet, never to them, nor to any other nation, has the Lord of Power manifested the riches of his mercy, or the ardour of his desire to be in person a helper and refuge to his creatures, as he does to Christians by remaining on their altars. *The Lord our God is himself our leader*, he has promised that he *will not leave, nor forsake us*, (Deut. xxxi. 6.)—he beholds us from this tabernacle engaged in the

combat with the world, the flesh, and the devil, with ourselves, with our passions, temptations, and evil inclinations--he looks on with the tenderest concern for our safety, with as much solicitude for our success, as if his happiness depended on ours—and with the most ardent desire that we may *be faithful until death*, and thereby merit *the crown of life*. (Rev. xi. 10.)—God then is for us—alas! why is there any thing against us? Why are so many thousands sunk in the waves of temptation?—why are so many shipwrecked in the sea of tribulation?—why are so many enslaved to that *roaring lion*, who *goeth about seeking whom he may devour*. (1 Pet. v. 8.) It is because we have no confidence in our Lord, but, on the contrary, lean on our own prudence;—it is because we forget Him, who, full of mercy and love, resides in the very midst of us, and who, if confidently and earnestly invoked, would direct all our steps, (*Prov.* iii. 5, 6.)—it is because we forget that our divine Protector remains in this adorable sacrament, not only to shield us in the combat against sin and death—not only to preserve us from falling, but to be also the sovereign, the efficacious remedy of those wounds we may receive in the conflict.

O then let us resolutely strive against our passions, and be not dismayed when repeatedly attacked by the enemies of God and our soul;—let us combat with an assured hope of success, for the Lord has promised to fight for us, to support us, and to be himself *the reward exceeding great* (Gen. xv. 1.) of the short labours, the temptations, the interior or exterior tribulations by which he *trieth* us, *that it may appear whether* or not we *love him with all our heart and with all our soul.* (Deut. xiii. 3.)

How is it possible, O my God! that men can be attached to a life in which they are daily exposed to the danger of meriting an eternal death?—how can they tranquilly walk in the midst of the snares which surround them, and not tremble for the fate of their immortal souls? O my God! my adorable Refuge! terrified at my own weakness, covered with the wounds I have already received, solicited by innumerable passions to offend thee anew, and tortured by the apprehension of being at this moment an object of thy just indignation, I throw myself at the foot of this altar. O Lord! thou, in whose *sight the stars are not pure!* (Job xxv. 5.) *cast me not away from thy face, and take not thy holy spirit from me.* (Ps. l. 13.) I have often

and grievously offended thee—I know not whether thou hast pardoned me, or whether I am worthy of love or hatred :---I am engaged in a conflict, to which, of myself, I am unequal, and by the abuse of the favours thou hast hitherto granted, I have rendered myself unworthy of those special graces which are necessary to conquer such enemies as mine. Pursued by unceasing solicitations to offend thee, my sovereign Good! wearied by my evil inclinations, and disgusted with the fund of depravity which lies lurking in my heart, I too often doubt whether I may not have committed the evil which I sovereignly dread; and am even on the point of wounding thy adorable heart, by despairing of that mercy which cannot be exhausted by ingratitude even greater than mine. O my God! my only Love! all my misery is before thee, and my conflicts are not hidden from thy sight:—thou hast not forbidden thy children to complain to thee ---to lay their griefs at thy feet, and pour their sorrows into that paternal bosom, where the good and the weak find a secure refuge. Ah! why have I so long delayed to seek thee, my divine Comforter? why have I not always fled to thee in this most amiable sacrament, where thou art to all

who hope in thee, a Helper, a Deliverer, *a tower of strength from the face of their enemies.* (Ps. lx. 4.) Behold me now, my God and Redeemer! behold me at thy sacred feet, oppressed and pursued by inveterate foes, whom thou alone canst put to flight. Arise, then, adorable Jesus! arise, and judge thy own cause, (*Ps. xxxiv. 23.*)---abandon not a soul which combats in thy name, and for thy love---*be thou unto me a God, a Protector,* and let this august tabernacle be to me *a house of refuge,* (Ps. xxx. 4.), where thou, my divine Master, wilt not only preserve me from grievous falls, but also instruct me in that sublime perfection which springs from humility of heart, and which teaches to detest sin, but at the same time to embrace the abjection which springs therefrom, and dwell with joy on the conviction which it creates of the innate misery of our weak nature.—Ah! why should I despond?—am I not resolved to die a thousand deaths rather than offend thee? Yes, my adorable Treasure! my sovereign Love! I will, with the assistance of thy grace, resist all that is contrary, not only to thy law, but to the perfection of thy love; and all the torments of hell itself I would infinitely prefer to the enjoyment of any worldly

delight which could separate me from thee. For these dispositions, Lord ! I most fervently thank thy boundless mercy ; they come not from myself, but are the effect of thy grace, which is with me notwithstanding my unworthiness. I will then confidently hope in thy assistance, in that mercy which is above all thy works, and once more cast myself, and all that I am, and have, into thy divine bosom : I commit my salvation to thy care, for I am well convinced that it is dearer to thee, than it can be to me, and that thou wilt never abandon a soul which thou didst not consider too highly purchased by the sacrifice of thy precious life.

IV.

If you love me, keep my commandments.
St. John xiv. 15.

Here we learn from Jesus, the eternal Truth, what is the test of love---the best and only solid proof we can produce of our compliance with the great precept of the law. The happy few who *are mindful of the commandments of the Lord to do them*, (Ps. cii. 18.) are those alone who can presume to say, that they love God, *not alone in word, nor in tongue, but in*

deed, and in truth. (1 John iii. 18.) O how deplorable it is, that Christians, the disciples of a God, who is himself *a consuming fire*, (Heb. xii. 29.) should so seldom profess, and still more rarely prove their love for a Saviour, who adopted them as his cherished favourites, when expiring on the cross, more through excess of love, than torment? How humiliating, that we should tremble at imaginary difficulties in the cause of him, whom love for us has prompted to overturn, by innumerable miracles, every obstacle to his actual and personal residence in the midst of us! But, if justice and gratitude be not sufficient motives for encouraging us to love, and observe the commandments of our divine and eternal Lover, let our own interest urge us to do so, for then we may *have confidence towards God*, and approach with assured hope of success to the throne of love, *and whatsoever we ask, we shall receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.* (1 St. John iii. 21, 22.)

O most amiable Jesus! adorable Victim of such love as no man hath ever shewn to his dearest friend! how is it possible that thou still remainest on our altars a

passive witness of our ingratitude!—how canst thou behold, without indignation, the conduct of those who profess their love for thee, but whose actions contradict their words! The pusillanimity of some, the insults of others, and the absolute forgetfulness of almost all, would long since have exhausted any love but thine, and forced thee to abandon, to its own ways, a world by which thou art so little known, and so imperfectly loved. Pardon, O Beloved of my soul! pardon my past indifference, my ingratitude, my forgetfulness, and abuse of thy mercies. O discover to me the love which consumes thy own adorable heart:---give me entrance into its inmost recesses, that I may number the pains, and contemplate the anguish which my salvation has cost thee, and then blush at my own tepidity and reserve. Let me learn, in that sacred furnace of divine charity, to consider all things easy and delightful, which are done for thee, my divine Lord, and to walk steadily in the thorny road wherein I can best prove my desire to love and imitate thee. Ah! why should I hesitate to brave every difficulty, and even to lay down my life for a God whose love for me induced him to become *obedient un-*

to death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. ii. 8.) Alas, dearest Jesus! I am my own enemy, when I refuse to open my whole soul to the impressions of thy love, and to live, act, and suffer from motives worthy of that divine virtue. O had I always done so, had I cheerfully embraced the sweet yoke of thy law, had I always *hearkened to thy commandments*, my *peace* would have been *as a river*, and my *justice as the waves of the sea!* (Isa. xlviii. 18.) But I have not loved thee, I have not lived for thee:—inconstancy and tepidity have hitherto marked my conduct, and without thy peculiar assistance I shall continue the same imperfect course of life. O come then, divine Love! sacred, consuming fire! come, and enter my soul, take possession of all its powers, and destroy, without reserve, whatever is unworthy of thee. Dilate my heart, that I may run in the way of thy commandments, (*Ps. cxviii. 32.*) and prove by my actions, as well as words, that thou, O amiable Jesus, art my sovereign, my only Love, and that the accomplishment of thy adorable will is the ultimate object of my efforts in thy service.

V.

Turn, O my soul, into thy rest, for the Lord hath been bountiful to thee. Ps. cxiv. 7.

“Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord!” exclaims St. Augustin, “and our hearts cannot rest until they rest in thee.” Which of us may not say, with this fervent lover, that we have been rebellious to grace; that we have sought for repose in the tumult of worldly pursuits, and, perhaps too often, in the excess of forbidden pleasure? But, alas! how few are there among us, who acknowledge with his sincerity, that we have erred in seeking our God in the multiplicity of creatures!—how few that deplore, with the love which purified and consumed his heart, the injury we do our Redeemer, in fleeing from his outstretched arms. Ah! let us imitate his fervour, that we may share the sweet peace by which it was rewarded;—let us approach this adorable sacrament, and there we shall find that rest, repose, and solid content, which no creature can give, or take away. Ah! why will we be our own enemies, our own tormentors? Can we alledge, as an excuse for our

sloth, the pretended difficulties of returning to our God? No; for *the kingdom of God is within us*, (St. Luke xvii. 21.) and *the Holy One of Israel* is in the very midst of us. (*Isa.* xii. 6.)

O Lord! the everlasting repose and delight of the blessed! the joy, the sweet consolation of all those who, wisely rejecting all earthly gratification, seek for happiness in thy bosom alone! behold thy strayed sheep, who is now exhausted and wearied in pursuits opposite to those of thy love. I acknowledge at thy adorable feet, O my sovereign happiness! that I have erred, and destroyed my own peace in forsaking thee, and thou knowest--- thou from whom the inmost recesses of my heart are not hidden---thou knowest that my folly has been its own punishment. Merciful to me in the midst of my wanderings, thou didst imbitter the vain joys in which I hoped to be delighted; and saidst a thousand times to my soul, that thou art her salvation, her God, her only solid good. Ah! did I not well know that there is no secure road but that of thy love?—had I not often experienced that there is no peace but in thy service? Why then was I so ungrateful as to stray

from thee? O my God! my adorable Love! I am firmly convinced that the heart made for thee, will be satisfied with nothing less than thyself. I consecrate myself for ever to thee in this august mystery, persuaded that the soul created to feast on thy adorable charms, can never be so happily, so profitably employed, as in contemplating the most wonderful miracle of thy mercy and love. Come then into my heart by the influence of thy grace, that I may enter into thine. Come, and by one sweet transport of thy love, concentrate every power of my soul in thee. Teach me, my heavenly Spouse! to spare no exertion in thy service, to despise, and for ever renounce every gratification which this world can bestow, that I may deserve to repose in thy arms, to lean on thy bosom, with thy beloved disciple, and *to taste and see how sweet* thou art. (Ps. xxxiii. 9.) Adorable heart of Jesus! delicious abodes of the just, and secure refuge of sinners! receive me:---thou art *my rest for ever and ever---*in thee *will I dwell, for I have chosen it.* (Ps. cxxxi. 14.)

VI.

Blessed are they that wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. Apoc. xxii. 14.)

Who are those happy souls to whom the Almighty here promises a share in the joys of eternal life? They are *the innocent of hands, and clean of heart, who* have not received *their souls in vain*, (Ps. xxiii. 4.), in whose mouth is found no lie, and who are without spot in the presence of their God. (Apoc. xiv. 5.) Those are they *who shall ascend the mountain of the Lord, who shall stand in his holy place*, (Ps. xxiii. 3.) who shall approach without fear to this awful tabernacle, and prostrate with assured confidence before the Lamb who resides therein, and who has *the keys of life and death*. (Apoc. i. 18.)—*Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God*, (St. Matt. v. 8.)---they shall penetrate the mysterious veils with which love has clothed their Redeemer, and adore him with raptures of love and admiration in this most amiable sacrament. *They shall no more hunger nor thirst*, (Apoc. vii. 16.) but drink at the torrent of delights, and eat of *the tree of*

life, (Gen. ii. 9.) to which God has given them, not only a claim, but even a right. Alas! why are these privileged souls by far the lesser number, since they have nothing which they have not received--since the adorable blood in which they have washed their robes, has been shed for all? Why is not their happy lot ours also?---cannot we all approach to him who hath loved us all, and hath laid down his life for our salvation?---to Him who desires nothing more ardently than to repurify our robes, to enkindle in our hearts the half-extinguished fire of charity, and to rank us among his beloved children, who, in heart and desire, *serve him day and night in his temple?* (Apoc. vii. 15.)

I well know, O Lord! that I have no claim to the blessings which thou promisest to the innocent and clean of heart. I deserve not a place among the happy few, who *have not defiled their garments, and who shall walk with thee, because they are worthy.* (Apoc. iii. 4.) No; my God! on the contrary, I feel that I am *wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* (Ibid. 17.) O divine Lamb, who takest away the sins of the world, wert thou not rich as thou art in that mercy which is from eternity, and unto eternity, I should

flee from thy presence, lest the merited rigour of thy justice should crush me to nothing. But when I behold thee in the most sacred Host, the Victim for our sins, ---not my Judge, but my Mediator, I begin to hope, that though I have not walked in innocence, yet thou wilt receive me with those who follow thee whithersoever thou goest. O my sovereign Good! I know thou art willing to sanctify---I know that if thou wilt sprinkle me with the adorable blood which is actually present on this altar, I shall be cleansed, and that if thou wilt wash me, I shall be made whiter than the snow. (*Ps.* l. 9.) I know that *if thou wilt thou canst make me clean.* (*St. Matt.* viii. 2.) Ah! remember, Beloved of my soul! remember that this confidence I feel in thy mercy, must be thy gift, and that it is certainly thy will that I should act from its impulse. Reject me not then, my only Hope! receive me, not only into thy arms, but into thy adorable heart, and give me entrance into the wound of thy sacred side,—that *opened door which no man can shut*, (*Apoc.* iii. 8.)—that gate, through which all thy children may safely pass to those realms of bliss, where thou, O divine Lamb! who art in the midst of this altar, *shall rule them, and shall lead them*

to the fountains of the waters of life, (Ib. vii. 17.), where they shall feed on the enrapturing view of thee, the uncreated and eternal Beauty, and receive from thyself a superabundant reward of all they shall have done, or suffered for thy love.

VII.

As the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you. Remain in my love. St. John xv. 9.

Our divine Lord, to manifest to us the infinite, the unspeakable tenderness of that love with which he has loved us, here makes use of a comparison which should fill us with astonishment, and penetrate our souls with the liveliest gratitude, and the most ardent charity. Jesus, beloved, cherished, begotten from eternity in the bosom of his almighty Father, expressly declares that his creatures are no less the dear objects of his eternal predilection, than he is himself the love and delight of Him who sent him. Astonishing as this truth is, it is more than sufficiently proved by the life, the death, the sufferings of our Redeemer, our Father, and our Victim. Every circumstance of his sacred life concurs to demonstrate, that our eter-

nal salvation, and even our temporal happiness, were the objects dearest to the heart of a Man-God. Filled with paternal solicitude for our welfare, this true friend of our souls would not leave us orphans, (*St. John* xiv. 18.), but has determined, in defiance of insult, of ingratitude, or forgetfulness, to remain present on our altars, as really as he is on the throne of his glory, and in our hearts, as intimately as he is in the bosom of his Father.

O Jesus ! beloved Spouse of my soul ! the God, the Model, the Victim of divine charity ! whence is it that eternally, essentially happy as thou art in the bosom of thy Father, thou hast descended on this altar, in the midst of men, always unworthy, and too often unwilling to know, or to love thee ? O my sovereign Beatitude, how prodigious are thy humiliations ! how ineffable, how adorable is the miracle of love which detains thee here ! Thou wilt prove to me, in a manner the most amiable and convincing, that the divine, immeasurable love, which links thee to thy almighty Father, binds thee also to me, fills thy adorable heart with the tenderest concern for my happiness, and gives me a certain pledge of thy ear-

nest wish to receive me into thy parental arms; to open to me all the treasures of thy mercy and thy grace; and to call me and treat me now, not as thy servant, but thy friend. (*St. John* xv. 15.) O my God! the dear inestimable friend of my soul! why hast thou not as many devoted servants, as many ardent lovers, as there are men indebted to thy love? But, Lord, prostrate before this altar, the true theatre of thy mercy, I solemnly protest, that if all men cease to love thee, yet will I never sovereignly love any object but thee, or any thing out of thee, which I love not for thee. Thou, my divine Love! who knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee, or at least desire most ardently to love thee; but thou seest also the imperfection of my charity, Alas! I am not worthy to experience the heavenly sweetness which results from thy love. Yet, Lord! is not love the fire which best purifies the soul, and best prepares it to love still more ardently? O plunge me then, adorable Jesus! into the burning furnace of thy most sacred heart, for I well know that if once I enter there I shall abide in thy love, (*Ib.* 9.), and *if my sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow, and if*

they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool. (Isa. i. 18.)

VIII.

What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it ?
Isa. v. 4.

At this affecting interrogation, which we may individually consider as addressed to ourselves, let us reflect seriously for a moment on the multiplied mercies which have marked every instant of our existence—let us lift up our eyes, and behold in the midst of us a God eternal, infinite, immortal, who for our sakes has appeared visibly among men, was clothed with their miseries, was susceptible of their pains, and at length was immolated for their salvation. 'These prodigious efforts of divine goodness, would to us appear the utmost stretch of mercy, since *greater love than this no man hath, that he lay down his life for his friends.* (St. John xv. 13.) But Jesus, whose thoughts are not our thoughts, nor his ways our ways, (*Isa.* lv. 8.), would love us in a manner infinitely beyond the conception of created intelligence, and has, in the adorable sacrament, renewed

and perpetuated the great sacrifice of mercy and love by which we were redeemed. O it is truly on this altar that our divine Lord most emphatically demands of each of us in particular, what is it he could do for us, which he has not done? It is from this tabernacle that he enquires what he could give, which he has refused—what he could suffer, which he has not cheerfully endured? Ah! let us ask our own hearts the same question, and they will reply, that the blood, the mercy, the choicest graces of a God have never been withheld, to render them fruitful in all virtue;—but, on the other hand, our ingratitude has frustrated the designs of his love. O let the moon blush, and the sun be ashamed, (*Ib.* xxiv. 23.), when we compare the labours of our Redeemer with their effect in our souls; and let us tremble, lest bringing forth nothing but wild grapes, the Lord may at length break down the wall of the vineyard he has himself planted: withhold the divine dew of his grace from falling thereon; and suffer it at last to become a desolate. (*Ibid.* v. 6.)

O merciful Jesus! the divine and adorable Benefactor of my soul! covered with confusion, and penetrated with grief, I ap-

proach this altar, where I believe thee truly present, not as my judge, but as my mediator, not to avenge the neglect of the graces I have hitherto received, but even to add to and renew them all. O Mercy! O Love! O adorable Abyss of divine compassion! wert thou not truly infinite, I should long since have exhausted thy invaluable treasures--I should have been already *trampled upon in thy indignation, and trodden down in thy wrath.* (Isa. lxiii. 3.) But, Lord, though thou speakest justice, yet thou art *a defender to save.* (Ibid. 1.) This emboldens me to approach thy sacred tabernacle, and in the bitterness of my heart, to deplore the grievousness of my offences. Deaf to thy divine voice, I have refused to listen to the inspirations of thy mercy, and made as little account of thy graces, as if they were not the purchase of thy blood, and the most precious pledges of thy will to save me. O my God! my Sovereign Good! why have I not served thee as thousands have done, whom thou hast less favoured? or what excuse have I for not being already far advanced in the road of perfection which thy saints and elect have travelled and still pursue? Can I presume to say that thy arm has been shortened (*Ib. l. 2.*) in my regard? Ah! surely it is

not on the cross that I can accuse thee of forgetting me ; nor is it on this altar that I can complain of exclusion from the tenderest of thy mercies. My adorable Redeemer ! on all occasions, in all circumstances, my heart tells me thou couldst not do more than thou hast done for thy wretched servant. O that I could say in my turn that I have also done for thee, my sovereign Life ! the little I was able ! O that I had offered thee my heart as generously, as unreservedly as thou requirest and meritest ! But I have brought forth far different fruits from those thou hadst reason to expect from the vineyard which thou hast moistened with thy blood, planted with the choicest vines, and cherished with the fondest care ! O Lord ! let thy mercy alone *judge between thee and thy vineyard*, (Ibid. v. 3.), for one glance of thy justice would banish me from thy presence for ever. Be not, I conjure thee, angry always, nor do not threaten for ever---I will enter into thy sacred wounds, and *hide myself a little therein, until thy indignation pass away*, (Ibid. xxvi. 20.), and then I know that thou wilt receive me again, and in mercy everlasting thou wilt have mercy on me.

IX.

As the hart panteth after the fountains of waters, so my soul panteth after thee, O God. Ps. xli. 1.

Thus should a soul, transported with love for her heavenly Spouse, sigh after the moment which would unite her to her Beloved. Thus did the Royal Prophet thirst *after the strong living God*, (Ps. xli. 2.), tho' never did that divine Being display to him, as he does to us, the infinite treasures of his mercy and love;—never could he have appeared to him as sovereignly amiable as he should to us in this divine and adorable mystery. O did we but know the immense riches contained in this sacred host; had we beheld, for one moment, the eternal beauty, the irresistible charms of the Lamb without spot, who resides therein; with what impetuous ardours would we run in *the odour of his ointments*! (Cant. i. 4.)—with what transports of love would we receive his divine embraces!—with what energy would we praise his boundless mercy!—with what care would we labour to remove all that, on our part, might hinder in our souls the effect of his divine visit! Were we sensible of the happiness within our reach, and of the earnest desire of our

heavenly Lover to give himself to us, our souls would thirst after him, and our *flesh*, *O how many ways!* (Ps. lxii. 2.) — we should leave, in heart and desire, this *desert land, where there is no way and no water*, (Ibid. 3.), and sigh with inexpressible ardour for the happy moment in which our own hearts would become his sanctuary, the theatre of his power, and his glory.

O God of my soul! *how good, how sweet is thy spirit in all things!* (Wisd. xii. 1.) — but how adorable, how infinitely amiable is the spirit of love which detains thee on this altar! Thou art every where great, omnipotent, magnificent; but, in this most sacred Hest, thou hast assembled and concentrated all that is immense, powerful, endearing and attractive in thy greatness, thy omnipotence, thy beauty, and thy love. O why then should I not desire thee? why should I not sigh after thee with more ardour than *the hart panteth after the fountains of living water?* (Ps. xli. 2.) Those who have never beheld thee, as I do, immolated for man, have sighed to appear before thy face, — and shall not I, to whom thou shewest thyself, desire thee, and love thee *by the sight and by the knowledge of thy great works.*

(Eccl. i. 15.) Prophets and patriarchs who never viewed thee in the amiable light of their nourishment and their victim, nevertheless sighed after, and earnestly longed for thy appearance ; shall not I, who behold thee annihilated for my sake, earnestly long for thy coming, and in expectation of thy divine presence, *languish with love* ? (Cant. v. 8.) O come thou, my sovereign Love ! my only Happiness ! come into my heart, for all my comfort is to expect thee, and all my bliss will be to possess thee for ever. Come, adorable fire of charity, and let not the snow and ice of my heart endure thy force without melting. (*Wisd.* xvi. 22.) Come, my dearest Beloved ! and let *the fountain of living waters which run with a strong stream from this life-giving sacrament*, (Cant. iv. 15.), replenish my heart, and sweep away every obstacle to the perfect reign of thy love in my soul.

X.

What is man, O Lord ! that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him ? Ps. viii. 5.

The angels who continually ascend and descend between heaven and earth to adore

their Lord alternately on the throne of his glory, and on that of his love; are filled with astonishment in contemplating the prodigious annihilation of their divine Monarch; and this astonishment is heightened in proportion to the knowledge they have of the infinite greatness, the adorable sanctity of Him, who, though *above all praise*, (Eccl. xliii. 33.), has become in the eucharist the food, the friend, the companion of man. Ah! how profoundly should we humble ourselves in the presence of this *immortal King of ages!*—how deeply should we sink into the abyss of our wretched nothingness, when *the Lord, who is terrible and exceedingly great*, (Ibid. 31.) descends into our hearts! *What is man, that he should approach the King his Maker?* (Eccl. ii. 12.) *What is man, and what is his grace, and what is his good*, (Eccl. xviii. 7.), that his sovereign Lord should become his guest? Ah! let us prostrate at his feet in humble, reverential awe;—let us adore him, praise him, magnify him—*we shall say much, and yet want words; but the sum of our words is, He is all*, (Ibid. xliii. 29.) and we are nothing.

Come, O my soul! let us prostrate before our God, our Creator, and our Sove-

reign Lord; let us *exalt him, put forth all our strength, and be not weary, for we can never go far enough.* (Eccl. xliii. 34.) But *what shall I be able to do to glorify thee, (Ibid. 30.), O my God!*—how is it possible that thou sufferest me in thy presence? how canst thou permit me to offer my unworthy homage before this altar,—this throne which none should approach but the clean of heart, the followers of thy cross, and the seraphim of the earth, who live but by love! *Who am I thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a worthless creature as I am?* (2 Kings ix. 3.) O angels of God! pure and enraptured spirits! you know *what manner of one is my Beloved*—tell him, I conjure thee, *that I languish with love,* (Cant. v. 8, 9.)—that I burn with desire to praise him as he is from the beginning, and to make some suitable acknowledgment for his multiplied mercies. O Goodness! O Munificence! adorable, astonishing condescension! why should I not approach to thee myself? Were the angels ever favoured as highly as I am? Yes; *I will speak to my Lord, I who am but dust and ashes,* (Gen. xviii. 27.); I will offer him a sacrifice of praise, for I am not destitute of a gift worthy of his ador-

able Majesty. *The Almighty himself is above all his works*, (Eccles. xliii. 30.), and he is at this moment my possession, my victim. Accept then, O most amiable Jesus ! accept thy own merits, thy own divine person to thank thee for thy mercies to me, and in union therewith, permit me to offer thee my heart, which ardently desires to honour thy degradation on this altar, by the most profound humility, and the most perfect love.

XI.

Remain in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine; so neither can you, unless you abide in me. St. John xv. 4.

Many Christians penetrated, at the foot of the altar, with gratitude for the mercies of Him whom they behold immolated for their salvation; and softened by the sweet dew of divine grace, which from this adorable sanctuary, distils on their souls as *rain upon the fleece, and as showers falling gently upon the earth*, (Ps. lxxi. 6.), depart from thence, animated with zeal for their conversion, and inflamed with that love, which burns in this tabernacle as in

its proper sphere. Why then are those souls,—ingrafted in Christ by faith in his actual presence on our altars, by hope in his merits, and love for his amiable perfections,—at length cast forth as branches to wither and die? (*St. John* xv. 6.) Why do so many leave their *first charity*? (*Rev.* ii. 4.)—that sacred fire which has been enkindled in their hearts at the foot of the altar? It is because, leaning not on their Beloved, but on their own prudence, they forget that all their *sufficiency is from God*, (*2 Cor.* iii. 5.); depending too firmly on the fervour which inflames their hearts, but which vanishes when removed from the furnace of divine charity, they think themselves something, whereas they are nothing, (*Gal.* vi. 3.), and remember not that *it is God who worketh in us both to will and to accomplish, according to his good will.* (*Phil.* ii. 13.) Let us then examine and rectify all that is deficient in our actual dispositions; and with humble diffidence in ourselves, place all our hope in Him, without whom we can do nothing, (*St. John* xv. 5.):—trusting in the Lord we shall not be confounded, *for as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth her seed to shoot*

forth, so shall the Lord make justice to spring forth in the soul which abides in him. (Isa. lxi. 11.)

O my God! *how great is thy mercy and thy forgiveness to them that turn to thee!* (Eccl. xvii. 28.) Thou hast received in this sanctuary a sinner who is unworthy of the least of thy mercies, and hast so inflamed my heart with thy love, that I would joyfully sacrifice my existence at this moment, rather than depart from thee by a wilful transgression. *I am become in thy divine presence as one finding peace,* (Cant. viii. 10.) — I behold, I possess thee; I feel that thou art my only good, my sovereign treasure, and that all the joys this world can afford, can give no satisfaction to a soul who knows, by sweet experience, the delights which spring from one moment's communication with thee. But, O my adorable Jesus! this is not the first time thou hast penetrated my heart, and forcibly inclined my soul to be all thine. Yet where is the fruit of those holy dispositions, for which I was indebted to thy gratuitous mercy? Alas! how should I tremble, when I reflect on my own inconstancy and ingratitude! What could I have found out of thee, worthy of my love? My God! I feel that I am weak,

but in making this acknowledgment, my soul is filled with consolation, because I know that when I am weak then I am strong, for in my weakness thy divine power will be perfected. (2 Cor. xii. 9.) Thou knowest, O Searcher of hearts ! that I confide not in the strength of my present resolutions, for *how could any thing endure, if thou wouldst not ? or be preserved if not called by thee ?* (Wis. xi. 26.) Call me then, O my only Love ! for I desire nothing so ardently as to hear thy sweet voice, and be deaf to every other sound : — place thyself *as a seal upon my heart*, (Cant. viii. 6.), and give me such ardent love, that each breath, sigh, or desire of my soul, may henceforward be so many acts of intimate union with thee in this ineffable and amiable mystery,

XII.

Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word in peace ; because my eyes have seen thy salvation. St. Luke ii. 29, 30.

St. Bernard justly remarks, that a soul who has once taken a near view of the adorable and enchanting perfections of the Divinity, closes her eyes, not only willing-

ly, but even joyfully, to all that is most attractive in created objects. O that we could now make the same affirmation from a happy experience of its truth! Why does not this divine *Sun of Justice*, (Mal. iv. 2.) entering into our souls by the holy communion, enlighten, and discover to us, beyond a doubt, the vanity, the emptiness of all that this world can bestow? When we possess, wholly and entirely, our sovereign Good,—when we receive *of his fullness*, (St. John i. 16.) in this ineffable mystery, what more can we desire, or what can we estimate which is less than God? Ah! let the bliss of actual union with our Beloved, teach us in what light we are to view every earthly gratification; let the sweet communications of our heavenly Spouse, fill us with disgust for all commerce with creatures, and even imbitter the most innocent friendship which has not God for its sole end and object. Did we listen to the voice of grace, we would at length offer to our God an undivided sacrifice of a heart, purified from every thought, every desire which tends not to him alone:—we would sigh only for an eternal possession of our divine treasure in that happy land where the *Sun of Justice shall go down no more, and the moon shall*

not decrease—for the Lord shall be unto us an everlasting light, and the days of our mourning shall be ended. (Isa. lx. 20.)

O my God! my adorable Delight! the supreme and only happiness of my soul! I possess thee now—I behold thee on this throne of thy love, entirely mine;—thou hast fed me *with the food of angels*, and hast given me *bread from heaven, prepared without labour, and having in it all that is delicious in every taste*, (Wis. xvi. 20.)—*My eyes have seen my salvation*, (St. Luke ii. 3.)—my soul has found Him whom she loves, (*Cant. iii. 4.*)—my heart has received her treasure, the dear and only object of her affection. O what more can I ask? what more can I ambition? *for what have I in heaven, and besides thee what do I desire upon earth?* (Ps. lxxii. 25.) But, Lord, is not this ineffable sacrament that bread of which he who eats shall still hunger?—Ah! thou knowest that I am not fully satisfied. Though I trust in thy mercy, that *thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back*, (Isa. xxxviii. 17.), and *clothed me with the garment of salvation, and the robe of justice*, (Ib. lxi. 10.), in this life-giving sacrament—tho' I repose in thy divine arms, and therein enjoy an anticipated heaven; yet still my soul sighs

for those happy mansions where perpetual security precludes the possibility of offending thee. O receive me therein, most merciful Jesus! for I ardently long to be dissolved, and to be with thee. *Shew me, O thou whom my soul loveth! where thou feedest in the mid-day, (Cant. i. 6.)*—Shew me that city of God, whose blessed inhabitants can as little cease to love, as thou canst cease to be lovely, adorable, enchanting, and infinitely worthy of all their transports. O that I could embrace thee this moment, without a fear of losing thee;—for, alas! in this valley of wretchedness, the most intimate union with thee, is exposed to the fatal danger of being eternally dissolved. What then have I not to fear from my natural inconstancy, innate malice, and wretched misery? O Love of my soul! I once more conjure thee to take me out of life, and condemn me to all that is most rigorous in the flames which purify thy elect, if thou foreseest I shall ever again have the unspeakable misfortune of losing thy grace. Still, as I know that the perfection of thy love, and the secure road to thee is the accomplishment of thy always equitable will, *that* shall henceforward be my paradise. O call my soul from this moment thy *pleasure in her, (Isa.*

lxii. 4.), and in the heart thou hast sanctified by thy presence, may thy will be forever done as it is in heaven.

XIII.

Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth—I have brought up children and exalted them, but they have despised me.
Isa. i. 2.

This reproach, full of mercy and love, was anciently addressed to a specially favoured, but most ungrateful nation—a nation chosen, beloved, protected by heaven, yet, notwithstanding, *laden with iniquity, a wicked seed, ungracious children*, (Isa. i. 4.) O how deplorably striking is the resemblance between that hardened race, and those who, in our days, may be justly denominated the people of God. *These too have forsaken the Lord, they have blasphemed the Holy One of Israel*, (Ibid.)---these also have insulted the majesty, forgotten the threats, and abused the mercy of that God who delights to dwell in the midst of them, (*Prov. viii. 31.*) It is true, this omnipotent Deity no longer appears in the splendors of increased glory---his sacred voice is no longer heard in thunder and lightning, in wrath and indignation

---he appears not as an avenging judge, but as a meek Lamb, a God hidden---a God-Saviour, (*Isa. xlv. 15.*), powerfully inviting all, in the accents of mercy and love, to approach his throne. O *hear then, ye deaf; and ye blind, behold that ye may see*, (*Ibid. xlii. 18.*) Listen to the invitations of love, and open your eyes to the light of faith, all ye that refuse to believe in the truth of this adorable, wonderful mystery :---approach all ye that believing therein, *forsake your Lord, and have forgotten his holy mount*, (*Ibid. lxv. 11.*) : ---approach all ye who, with insulting irreverence, *have trodden down his sanctuary*, (*Ibid. lxiii. 18.*), and only enter to *provoke him to anger before his face*, (*Ib. lxv. 3.*) :---approach, *return, as you have deeply revolted*, (*Ibid. xxxi. 6.*), and expiate with sighs and anguish the injury offered to your Redeemer. Delay no longer, for mercy abused will one day give place to inexorable justice, and this divine Lamb will at length appear, not as a Saviour, but as *the Lord that rendereth recompense to his enemies*. (*Ibid. lxvi. 6.*)

O God of infinite majesty ! behold at thy sacred feet a sinner who has deserved to be eternally banished from this awful sanctuary :---behold the most ungrateful among

those who have abused thy mercy---the most hardened among those who have slighted thy promises, and been deaf to thy voice. O adorable Victim of thy own boundless love! were it possible that a sentence of death could proceed from this tabernacle, I would flee from thy presence, because I know that a thousand deaths would be insufficient to expiate the enormities I have myself committed against this adorable mystery, as well as the insults of all men, which I am come to acknowledge and deplore. But, Lord, miserable, guilty, undeserving as I am, yet, surely, I am one of thy own people, a child who will not deny thy presence (*Isa. lxiii. 8.*) on this altar, or refuse my firm assent to all the mysteries contained in this miracle of love. *Hear me then a poor wretch making supplication to thee, and presuming on thy mercy.* (*Judith ix. 17.*) Listen to me, O injured, but most merciful Redeemer! on behalf of all those *unbelieving people who walk in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts,* (*Isa. lxv. 2.*)--in behalf of all who wound thy adorable heart, by fleeing from thy sanctuaries, and distrusting thy mercy. Yet, alas! who am I to implore thy compassion on sinners, whose iniquities I have imitated, and whose ingratitude I

have exceeded? O that I could expiate their offences and my own! O that I could offer thee as much fervent love, as much lively contrition, as thou receivest contempt and insult, and art treated with ingratitude and forgetfulness in this most amiable mystery! I have nothing of myself, I acknowledge, nor can I do any thing but sin, when abandoned by thee—still I am enabled by thy actual residence on this altar, in quality of my victim, to offer a satisfaction proportioned to all thou endurest for me. Accept then, divine heart of my Saviour! the love with which thou art thyself consumed, to atone for the indifference of all men. Remember the tenderness with which thou hast loved them—the mercy with which thou hast redeemed them,—the patience with which thou hast waited for them;—and then I know that for thy own *sake thou wilt remove thy wrath far off, and for thy praise thou wilt have mercy on them, lest they should perish.* (Isa. xlviii. 9.)

XIV.

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, O Lord, they shall praise thee for ever and ever. Ps. lxxxiii. 5.

The happy few, who know what it is to

love purely and solely that adorable Being who is alone amiable, will surely join with the prophet in pronouncing those blessed, whom eternal mercy has espoused for ever *in justice and judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in tender mercies.* (Osee ii. 19.) They will envy the happy lot of those whom the Almighty has taken from the ends of the earth—whom he has replenished with his spirit, and filled with the treasure of his graces--whom he has hidden in the secret of his sanctuary, that *all their works* may be *as the sun in his sight, and his eyes continually upon their ways.* (Eccl. xvii. 16.) Rich in their poverty; free in their subjection; profusely recompensed for the deceitful pleasures they have abandoned and despised; they are, in truth, *the manifest portion of God.* (Ibid. 15.) They feed on the manna of heaven—they drink and are inebriated (*Cant. v. 1.*) with the torrent of delights which flows from the heart of their Beloved—their profession is to love—their companion is a God, who resides among them in *a tabernacle that cannot be removed,* (Isa. xxxiii. 20.) --and their destination, for eternity, is to *follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.* (Apoc. xiv. 4.) These indeed are blessed, the children of mercy, the beloved of the

Lord : but shall we be content with knowing their happiness, without an effort to share therein ? Ah ! if we be unworthy of permanent residence in *that land which floweth with milk and honey*, (Deut. xi. 9.), let us at least remember that we have been all espoused to our God in faith. (Osee ii. 20.) O yes ; we cannot too often repeat, or too seriously consider, that it is by faith in this most sacred mystery,—by lively, animated faith, working by charity in Jesus Christ, that we shall know he is the Lord. (*Ibid.*) It is by the waters of life drawn with faith and love from these fountains of the Saviour, (*Isa.* xii. 3.), that *the land which was desolate and impassable, shall be glad, and the wilderness shall rejoice, and shall flourish like the lily.* (*Ibid.* xxxv. 1.)

O my God ! the wise and adorable Distributor of thy own gifts ! permit me, at the foot of thy tabernacle, to praise thee in thy saints, and to extol thy power in the miracles of mercy thou hast so often wrought in favour of weak mortals ;—permit me, O Lord of majesty ! to glorify thy name for the graces bestowed on those who are solely devoted to thy love. O spotless Sanctity ! may thy happy spouses learn from thee, their divine Master and Model,

to know, to appreciate, and to prolong their happiness, by living but for thee, who art their praise and their God, that hath done for them such great and admirable things. (*Deut. x. 21.*) Teach them, immaculate Lamb! to yield not to the angels in purity, to the seraphim in ardour, or to the cherubim in desire and in effort to know their Beloved, who is *chosen out of thousands*, (*Cant. v. 10.*)---let their eyes feast but on thy enchanting beauty—their ears be open but to thy divine voice—and their hearts be sensible alone to the inspirations of thy mercy and love. O my adorable Love! *blessed, truly blessed, are they that see thee, and are honoured with thy friendship!* (*Eccles. xlviii. 11.*) Alas! why am I not among them? why have I not a place in *that land which of all is most dear to thee?* (*Wisd. xii. 7.*) Ah! I confess, in the sincerity of my heart, that I am not worthy to be ranked among thy beloved children; but still I feel that thou art the dear, adorable Spouse of my soul, and that in this sanctuary of love, thou wilt reject none who believe in thee. O divine Mercy! I believe in thee---thou hast espoused me in that saving faith, which is dearer to me than life;---I hope in thee, and firmly trust that thou wilt now *have mercy on her that de-*

served to be *without mercy*. (Osee ii. 23.)
 O call me to thee this moment, let me hear thee from this throne of love, naming me as thy child ; my heart shall for ever disclaim every pursuit but thy love, and shall answer, in transports of gratitude and praise, that *thou art my God*. (Ibid. 24.)

XV.

Come to me all you that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. St. Matt. xi. 28.

Who among the poor or afflicted of this world would remain an instant plunged in poverty or anguish, were the riches of the earth within their reach, or had they access to a friend both able and willing to give peace to their souls? Alas ! how true it is, that *the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light*, (St. Luke xvi. 8.), for how many thousands do we see labouring and heavy laden with internal and external crosses, yet they are *tossed in the tempest, without comfort*, (Isa. liv. 11.), because they will not approach to the Lord, who is their Healer. (*Exod.* xv. 26.) How many, conscious of the rigorous judgments they have deserved, tremble at the prospect of those eternal miseries from which infinite mercy

alone can deliver them, yet refuse to seek a refuge where it may surely be found. That God of mercy *is come* on this altar, *and there is not a man* to profit of his presence,---*he calls, and there is none that will hear.* *Is his hand then shortened and become little, that it cannot redeem ? or is there no strength in him to deliver ?* (Isa. l. 2.) Alas ! ungrateful as we are, this sovereignly merciful Saviour is to us no less a *God hidden*, (Ibid. xlv. 15.), than a forgotten benefactor. Long since should we have sunk under our load, fainted in the way, and expired from the multiplied wounds of our souls, had he not, unsought for, assisted our weakness, and granted us his grace independent of our entreaties. O too true it is, that *he carries us in his arms, and we have not known that he has healed us.* (Osee xi. 3.) But, *O ye sons of men, how long will you be dull of heart ?* (Ps. iv. 3.) how long shall we be deaf to the voice of a God whose essential happiness our misery cannot lessen, yet who burns with desire to impart rest to our souls ? O happy, thrice happy are they who shall listen to and obey the voice of their Redeemer ;---reposing in his arms, *they shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun strike them ; for*

he that is merciful to them shall be their shepherd, and at the fountains of waters he shall give them to drink, (Isa. xlix. 10.)

---but unhappy those who, seeking their peace elsewhere than in him, have reason to tremble lest he should swear, *in his wrath, that they shall not enter into his rest. (Ps. xciv. 11.)* Come then all without exception---*break forth and come all ye nations from round about, and gather yourselves together, (Joel iii. 11.),* at the foot of this tabernacle ;--let all be comforted, and in presence of this sacred saving Victim, *let the weak say, I am strong. (Ibid. 10.)*

O eternal Majesty ! infinite, adorable Perfection ! is it possible thou desirest that I should approach thee ? or can I be among the number of those to whom thou offerest rest in thy sacred arms ? O my God ! though I am miserable only because I am faithless to thee---though I deserve not a remedy for the evils I have myself occasioned, yet I feel that I am not excluded from thy ancient mercies, and that I am invited, with all those who labour and are heavy laden, to seek refreshment and repose in thy divine heart. O why have I so long suffered without merit or consolation ?---*was there no balm in Galaad ?--or*

was *there no physician there?* (Jer. viii. 22.)---did I imagine there was no pity in that heart which is tenderness itself---no compassion in that God whose very essence is goodness, and whose favourite attribute is boundless mercy? O divine mercy! eternal inexhaustible mercy! I see that it is not possible to tire, or force thee to abandon, while in this life, the objects of thy love. Thou hast called me with tenderness peculiar to thyself;--vanquished by thy love, allured by thy promises, I from this moment renounce the vain, empty gratifications with which I have sought to alleviate my sufferings, and lighten my cross. I leave all creatures for thy sake, and already am I abundantly recompensed, for *when I had a little passed by them, I found Him whom my soul loveth. I held him, and I will not let him go.* (Cant. iii. 4. I have found in this most sacred mystery a Comforter who is *sweet and mild, and plenteous in mercy,* (Ps. xxxv. 5.)---a God who is all compassion,--a Spouse who is *all lovely*, all desirable, all enchanting; and whose adorable perfections are infinitely beyond the conception of angels or men---yes; *such is my Beloved, and he is my friend.* (Cant. v. 16.) O Friend of my soul! sovereign Remedy

of all my evils ! receive me---open to me that divine heart which shall henceforward be the repository of every thought, every feeling, every sigh of my soul. Thou knowest, for thou art the witness of my most *secret* movements. that I labour under the insupportable weight of many and grievous offences,--that I struggle against passions which are unmortified and unsubdued,--that I am exposed to ten thousand temptations which fill me with apprehensions, doubts, and anguish. Ah! Lord, thou alone canst relieve and deliver me : ---but, my adorable Beatitude! by what heavenly charm hast thou already lightened my load, and penetrated my heart with love for those trials from which I sought to be delivered? Ah! it is the angel of thy presence that has saved me--it is thy love and thy mercy which has redeemed me, that now carries me, and lifts me up to understand the value of a share in thy cross, and the combats of thy saints. (*Isa.* lxiii. 9.) Complete thy own work, my sovereign Lord---I ask not to be freed from my cross, but to be fastened for ever thereto by the bands of love---to suffer with thee, and in thy name ; for I now feel, from happy experience, that a soul

united to thee by faith and resignation, will always find thy *yoke sweet and thy burden light*. (Matt. xi. 30.)

XVI.

I will draw them with the cords of Adam, with the bands of love. Osee xi. 4.

Had Jesus appeared on our altars arrayed in all the terrors of his majesty, and the splendour of his glory, he would have commanded at least all our adoration and respect. But to this Victim of immeasurable charity, one sigh, one fervent movement of a heart touched with love, is more pleasing and acceptable, than the forced or servile homage of thousands, who may fear to offend, but know not how to love. Solely intent on proving his eternal predilection for man, and anxious only to secure a reciprocal return, Jesus divests his divine person of all that could repulse or terrify, and appears in this most amiable mystery in the endearing and attractive characters of our Friend, our Redeemer, Mediator, and Father. Ah! let us ask our own hearts what has he left undone to prove his unquestionable title to each of these appellations. How often, instead of punishing,

does he wink at the sins of men, to induce them to repentance--how often does he profit of our most grievous transgressions, to open to us all the richest treasures of his mercy, *that Israel may be caught in their own heart, with which they have departed from him*, (Ezech. xiv. 5.), that they may experience his unmerited mercy with humble, penitent gratitude, and be confounded when the Lord shall be pacified towards them for all they had done. (*Ibid.* xvi. 63.) But, above all, with what irresistible tenderness does he often condescend to the natural inclinations and imperfect desires of those who sincerely endeavour to be solely his, but who experience with regret all the misery and frailty of their weak nature. To win their hearts by those sensible consolations which they desire, often does he reward their least efforts, and *bring upon them, as it were, a river of peace*, (Isa. lxvi. 12.), that he may first draw them *with the cords of Adam*, (Osee xi. 4.), and then for ever captivate them in the bands of more solid, but less sensible love. O who can resist his mercy?—who can refuse to follow him confidently—to adhere to him inseparably, particularly in this sacred mystery of mercy and love? Blessed are those that profit

of their very faults and miseries, to fly to their God with the tender confidence of a child towards a fond indulgent parent; for *as one whom the mother caresseth, so will he comfort them, and they shall be comforted.* (Isa. lxvi. 13.)

O most amiable Jesus! the life and only happiness of my soul! how is it possible that I should have so long, so obstinately resisted the powerful attractions of thy infinite love!—by what miracle of ingratitude have I been so long deaf to thy voice, and insensible to thy infinite goodness? Alas! I have been ungrateful it is true, but, my sovereign, adorable Benefactor! I have not forgotten the innumerable occasions in which thou hast already pardoned my sins, and received me, on my return, with more than paternal tenderness, and this encouraging remembrance is what now induces me to flee to thee with as much confidence as a child would to the best and most indulgent of parents. Ah! why should I hesitate to do so?—hast thou not assured me, both by word and action, that though a mother should forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb, yet thou wilt never forget me? (*Isa. xlix. 15.*) How often hast thou taken occasion from my most grievous

transgressions to display the greatness of thy love, and to crown me more liberally with mercy and forgiveness? How often have my feeble exertions in thy service been rewarded with a torrent of delight, which thou hast not always granted to those who have borne the heat and burden of the day?—my least sacrifices, my most wavering resolutions, have been recompensed with such sweet peace, as is due only to the faithful, persevering followers of the cross. Thou hast given me a heart susceptible of love; that heart thou hast made for thyself, and thou alone knowest how often thou hast endeavoured to gain entire possession of thy own inheritance;—how often thou hast imbittered every earthly pursuit, that my natural thirst after happiness and repose may force me to seek them where alone they may be found:—how often thou hast infused into my soul a clear conviction, an intimate persuasion of thy transcendent beauty, and infinite perfection, that thou mayest win my heart by its natural inclination to love what is amiable, beautiful, and perfect. All this thou hast done for me a wretched sinner, that having once tasted and seen how sweet is the Lord, (*Ps. xxxiii. 9.*), I may be induced to follow thee for my own sake,

and to cleave to thee for thine. O Love ! at length thou hast for ever conquered, thou hast captivated my soul, thou hast subdued my whole heart, not by threats or reprehensions, but by the irresistible attractions of infinite goodness and condescending mercy. Since my weakness, misery, and wretchedness, have not destroyed thy earnest desire of possessing my heart, why should they be obstacles to my approaching this altar, where thou art weak with the feeble, abandoned with the desolate, despised with those who are contemned, poor with the indigent ; in fine, where thou art all to all, that thou mayest captivate all in *the bands of love* ? (Osee xi. 4.) O my everlasting Repose ! thou shalt in future be the remedy of my evils, as well as the source of all my good ; thou shalt be the comfort of my affliction, as well as the subject of my joy ; for I now clearly see that thou residest in this adorable mystery, as well to *bind up that which was broken*, and to *strengthen that which was weak* ; as to preserve that which was strong, to feed thy saints with the manna of heaven, (*Ezech. xxxiv. 16.*), and to reward their exertions in thy service with such ineffable joys as it is not given to man to utter.

XVII.

Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, and called thee by thy name; thou art mine.
Isa. xliii. 1.

Our divine Lord here reminds us, by the mouth of his prophet, of the greatest and most certain motive of our hope and confidence, that he may divest our petitions of that wavering diffidence which usually destroy their effect. He desires us to call on him without fear of his justice, because through love and mercy he has died to save us; and it is surely in presence of this adorable sacrament, instituted to shew forth his passion and death, (1 *Cor.* xi. 26.), that he peculiarly desires we should dwell with gratitude and love on the sacred mystery of our redemption.—But among the myriads whom the blood of a God has shed to save, how few are there who comply with his parting order of doing this in remembrance of him? (*St. Luke* xxii. 19.)—how few approach the divine Ark of the new Covenant with that confidence and love with which it should inspire them. How many Christians even assist at the awful sacrifice of our altars, without once calling to mind the bitter sufferings by which they were rescued

from perdition, without reflecting that our adorable Victim is *the Lamb which was slain from the beginning of the world*, (Apoc. xiii. 8.), and offered for our sins on Mount Calvary in transports of love, in excessive agony, and universal contempt. O that the insults, outrages, and ingratitude then endured by our divine Redeemer had ceased with the bloody sacrifice which terminated his mortal life! But, alas! they are too often renewed with increased malice by thousands, who, unlike the Jews, acknowledge the divinity of Him who is daily immolated for their daily crimes, yet seem determined to forfeit their claim to his superabundant merits, by absolute forgetfulness of all that was done and suffered for their salvation. Ah! let us not imitate those who *crucify again the Son of God*, (Heb. vi. 6.), who forget the sufferings of Him by whose death they live:—let us never approach this altar without endeavouring to excite in our hearts those sentiments of contrition, love, and compassion, which would surely have filled our souls had we witnessed the tragic scene exhibited on Calvary, and which, with increased mercy and love, is renewed, in a mystical manner, on our altars. Let us count it a folly to glory in any thing but the cross of

our Lord Jesus Christ, (*Gal. vi. 14.*)—let us labour to advance so far in the love of our crucified God, that our hearts may burn within us (*St. Luke xxiv. 32.*) each time that we really and truly behold, in this sacrament, the sacred Victim who once bled for our transgressions. Let us henceforward confidently hope that we belong to him who has redeemed us, who has graven us in his hands, (*Isa. xlix. 16.*), and to whom our souls are far dearer than his own life and blood.

O sacred Victim of my salvation! how dear must my soul be to thee, since, not content with dying to purchase my eternal happiness, thou still continuest on this altar the life-giving sacrifice by which thou didst redeem the universe. O adorable *High-priest* of our souls! *holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens!* (*Heb. vii. 26.*), I most firmly believe that thou art present on this altar, the same Victim who once expired, for my sake, on Mount Calvary:—I believe that, in this most amiable mystery, thou art always living to make intercession for us; and that thou art *able*, willing, and anxious *to save for ever them that come to God by thee.* (*Ibid. 25.*) I believe that the adorable blood which

gushed from every pore of thy sacred body, now flows on this altar as really, abundantly, and efficaciously as it once did on that of Calvary; and that the love which consumed thy divine heart in the midst of thy torments, still burns with increased vehemence. O Spouse of my soul! beloved Companion of my exile! I know that thou wert once immolated on a cross for my sake; thy divinity insulted and denied; thy sacred body covered with wounds and blood;—but when I behold thee equally exposed to contempt and insult on this altar, thy sacred humanity itself concealed under the humiliating forms of bread and wine, I know not in which situation thou art most amiable, merciful, and endearing;—I know not where to adore thee most profoundly, to love thee most ardently; for in both, thou art entirely, unreservedly sacrificed for my salvation. Ah! my adorable Love! my crucified Lord! thou art here, as in thy passion, a meek lamb, a passive victim of insult and contempt;—thy divine heart is here more deeply wounded than on the cross, because pierced by those who are thy servants, whom thou hast *chosen, and not cast away*, (Isa. xli. 10.), and to whom the astonishing *testimonies* of thy love *are*

become exceedingly credible (Ps. xcii. 5.) by the light of faith. O why have I, with more than Jewish ingratitude, joined in their perfidy! why have I slighted the mercy of a God by whom I was formed, *redeemed, and called by name*, (Isa. xliii. 1.)—of a merciful Saviour who died on a cross, and resides on this altar from the excessive love with which he has loved me! Is it because thou art *silent* in this tabernacle, *and as one that seeth not*, that thou art forgotten? (*Ibid.* lvii. 11.) O God of my soul! God hidden and insulted, both in thy passion and in this adorable mystery! I feel that I deserve to be condemned with the ungrateful multitude who refused to believe in the miracles wrought before their eyes:—yet, criminal as I am, I do not, and cannot fear, because thou hast redeemed me. My soul is filled with the tenderest, liveliest confidence, because thou art my *Redeemer, from everlasting is thy name*. (*Ibid.* lxiii. 16.)—I hope in thee, because thou art not come on earth, still less on this altar, to judge the world, but to save. Save me then, O Jesus! I conjure thee by thy cross and passion; and grant that I may lose every thing rather than the recollection of what thou hast done and still doest for my sake. Let thy

humiliations be my glory, thy cross my support, and thy amiable, adorable sacrament my treasure and refuge; that I may be associated to *the fellowship of thy sufferings, being made conformable to thy death*, (Phil. iii. 10.), and that my sweetest comfort may be to weep at the foot of thy altars, not over thee, but over my own sins, and the offences of those for whom thou hast suffered.

XVIII.

With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you. St. Luke xxii. 15.

Although our sovereign Lord, in embracing our weak nature had given an incontestable proof of that solid love which tends to union with the object beloved, yet we learn from his own sacred lips that he ardently sighed for the moment wherein he had determined to institute that adorable sacrament, by which, till the end of ages, he was to abide in man, and man in him. With desire he desired to eat that pasch with his beloved disciples:—with desire, with vehemence, with ardour, with tenderness, with love altogether inconceivable to created intelligence, he longed to distribute to his chosen followers that

life-giving bread which descended from heaven, (*St. John* vi. 51.) ; and until the moment arrived for incorporating himself really and truly with him, his divine soul was, as it were, straitened, his boundless love, in some measure, restrained. But when this prodigy of love was accomplished—when this God of all majesty and glory was carried in his own hands, who can conceive the impetuous transports of love with which he distributed the adorable body that was about to be sacrificed, and the saving blood which was soon to be *shed for the remission of sins*? (*St. Matt.* xxvi. 28.) Such were the dispositions of a God towards man, and such they still are ; for his continued residence on our altars, his daily, hourly repetition of the miracle of mercy which, at his last supper, astonished the heavens, emphatically assure us all, that *with desire he desires to eat this pasch with us* also ;—that he is present in the adorable eucharist far less to be the object of our adoration and respect than to be the strength and nourishment of our souls, by a frequent communication of that life-giving bread of which he who eats shall live for ever. (*St. John* vi. 52.) But shall Jesus alone wish for a union which to him is alone humiliating and degrading ; and

shall man blindly refuse or neglect a blessing which dignifies and elevates him above the angels themselves? Shall this almighty Being *stand at the door* of our hearts, *and knock*, promising that *if any one will open to him the gate, he will come in to him, and sup with him*, (Apoc. iii. 20.) ; and shall man always persevere in that cold indifference for the adorable Eucharist so detrimental to the interests of his soul—so little in unison with the ardours of his Saviour? O let all who desire peace on earth, or happiness in heaven, approach this sanctuary where He resides who will bestow the one, and secure the other—let all who slothfully neglect the regular and christian life which frequent communion undoubtedly requires, rise from that sleep which will certainly terminate in death ; for as little can such souls survive the loss of the bread of life, as the body can sustain a total privation of corporal food. *Where is wisdom, where is strength, where is understanding, where is length of days and life, where is the light of the eyes and peace*, (Baruch iii. 13.), if not in a frequent, fervent approach to that sacrament, which contains not grace alone, but the author and giver of grace? O blessed are those who are called to the

marriage supper of the Lamb ; but, on the contrary, miserable are those self-excluded guests who decline that invitation full of mercy and love, and thus merit an eternal exclusion from his heavenly kingdom.

O almighty Lord ! great in all things, and in all circumstances worthy of praise ! amiable, enchanting, and infinitely deserving of love ! never didst thou appear more prodigal of mercy than in the institution of this most adorable sacrament—never didst thou prove thyself so truly a Saviour, a God *willing to sanctify*, (Isa. xlii. 21.), as when thou didst invite all men to partake in the sacred banquet of thy body and blood, by disclosing thy earnest desire to contract with them an intimate union of mercy and love. O omnipotent Majesty ! didst thou not sufficiently humble thy almighty greatness by a union with the miseries of human nature in the moment of the incarnation ? didst thou not espouse all men on the altar of the cross, and is not thy love satisfied ? No, Lord ! I know from thy own sacred lips that a less gift than thyself will not do justice to thy ardent desire of enriching, ennobling, and dignifying those cherished mortals whom thou lovest with such unexampled, such excessive tenderness. O infinite Good-

ness ! eternal Wisdom ! I know that thou hadst me also in view, when thou didst give thy flesh for the life of the world ;— it was for me that thou veiledst thy glories under the familiar forms of bread ;— it was to become my nourishment, my strength, my life, my all. I am firmly persuaded of all this, and it would be the most crying ingratitude to doubt the sincerity of thy desire to open to me also this superabundant treasure of thy most precious graces. But, Lord ! art not thou *the High, the Eminent, that inhabiteth eternity* ? (Isa. lvii. 15.)—art thou not a God *among* whose saints *none is found unchangeable, and before whom the heavens are not pure* ? (Job xv. 5.) *What is man that thou shouldst set thy heart upon him,* (Ibid. vii. 17.), and what am I, in particular, that thou shouldst assure me, with mercy and love peculiar to thyself, that thou desirest to eat this pasch with me ? Dost thou not know my heart ? is there one of its miseries hidden from thee, or rather is not the deep abyss of its wretchedness known clearly to thee alone ? O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world ! thou art now peculiarly necessary to me, and such is my unbounded confidence in thy immeasurable love, that I am resolved to approach thee,

notwithstanding my wretchedness ; firmly persuaded that by so doing I shall only second thy merciful designs, and satisfy the burning ardours which consume thy heart. Behold me then, Beloved of my soul !—thou desirest to eat this pasch with me, and, *O Desired of all nations !* (Agg. ii. 8.), adorable Object of the enraptured love of the angels and saints ! thou knowest that I most fervently desire to give thee entire possession of my heart. Come, for *as the hart panteth after the fountains of waters, so my soul panteth after thee.* (Ps. xli. 1.) I desire thee, O Treasure of the blessed ! I long to be enlightened by thee, O resplendent *Sun of Justice !* (Mal. iv. 2.) I languish to embrace thee, O enchanting Beauty ! to pour out my whole soul with Magdalen at thy feet, and even with thy beloved disciple to lean on thy bosom, and learn from thee how to desire, how to love, how to cleave to thee alone. Ah ! give me thy adorable body—give it to me now---give it to me often ;---let the study of my life be to prepare thee a dwelling in my soul ; the summit of my happiness to receive thee ; and all my comfort to expect a repetition of thy merciful visit. But above all, O beloved of my soul ! let the fruit of my communions

be such a fervent increase of divine charity, as may render every respiration of my heart, and every movement of body and soul, an act of ardent love and union with thee in this most amiable mystery.

XIX.

I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled? St. Luke xii. 49.

The great object of our beloved Redeemer's mission on earth was to teach all men that sacred science, which, in itself, includes the perfection of the law; thus to open an easy, short, secure, and delightful passage to that sublime perfection which he commands, and which, divested of divine love as its motive, its life, its end, its sole object, may perhaps appear beyond the strength of weak nature. Jesus desires our temporal peace—our eternal happiness---he therefore came on earth to secure both, by diffusing among all that consuming fire which burns in his own adorable heart. Every action of his mortal life, every circumstance of his bitter passion, and, in particular, every instant of his residence on our altars, sufficiently proves that in labouring to enkindle the

ardours of divine charity, he did not confine himself to precept alone. He has pursued us with graces, loaded us with favours, and distinguished us with such astonishing, such stupendous instances of Godlike liberality, as should naturally tend to enkindle the fire of gratitude and love. With the noble generosity of a disinterested Benefactor he has rejoiced over us in doing us good, and he has himself declared that he bestows his benefits with all his heart, and all his soul. (*Jer. xxxii. 41.*) But has our divine Lover yet succeeded in gaining our hearts? Are we yet inflamed with that fire which is actually cast on earth by the institution of this divine mystery, at once the furnace and source of the purest flames? Alas! so far from that lively gratitude, that animated love which unexampled tenderness and countless benefits so justly merit, does not our conduct too strongly imply either ignorance or forgetfulness of our immense obligations? has not our amiable Saviour cause to reproach us from this tabernacle in these affecting words, *I have loved you, but you have said, wherein hast thou loved us?* (*Mal. i. 2.*) Ah! let us at length open our hearts to the all-reviving beams of this Sun of Justice, who is come to

in flame and consume all that is contrary to his love. On our altars *the Light of Israel* is as a fire, and *the Holy One thereof* as a flame. (Isa. x. 17.) *The inanimate mountains themselves melt like wax at the presence of the Lord*, (Ps. xvi. 5.) ; who then can resist his heat? (*Ibid.* xviii. 7.) —who can be insensible of his love, or unmindful of his benefits? O if there be an adamant heart of that description, how should it tremble for its eternal doom, for *he that loveth not abideth in death*, (1 St. John iii. 14.), and *the hope of the unthankful shall melt away as the winter's ice*. (Wis. xvi. 29.)

Amiable and adorable Jesus! eternal Beatitude and only Treasure of my soul! how is it possible that thou hast *been so long a time with me*, and that I *have not known* thee? (St. John xiv. 9.) How couldst thou have so long burned with love for me on this *high*, this *glorious throne*, which is truly and really *the place of our sanctification*, (Jer. xvii. 12.), without inflaming a heart which infinite love alone induces thee to ask or to accept? O my most beloved Redeemer! God of charity! first and noblest victim of that heavenly fire thou art come to cast upon earth! if I am a stranger to the extatic joys which

those happy souls feel, whose sole delight and treasure thou art, I cannot alledge want of disposition on thy part, since the persevering tenderness and liberality of thy love towards me would long since have triumphed over any heart less obdurate than mine. O how can I reflect on all thou hast done to soften my hardened and insensible soul, without melting into tears of the deepest regret! —how can I remember that love which *chose me in the furnace of poverty*, (Isa. xlviii. 10.), which drew me from an abyss of wretchedness and misery to rank me among the most favoured of thy children, without being animated and inflamed with the liveliest gratitude! Yes, my sovereign happiness! thou hast spared neither graces, nor inspirations, nor entreaties to draw me to thee —and even when I had become more criminal by an abuse of all those precious means of salvation —when I had *made my heart as the adamant stone lest I should hear thy law*, (Zach. vii. 12.), far from reproaching or abandoning me as I deserved thou wert *silent in thy love*, (Soph. iii. 17.), and, with unexampled forbearance, awaited my repentance. O dear and amiable Jesus! adorable object of never-ending praise! thou hast *not done in like manner to every*

nation, and thy love thou hast not thus made manifest to them. (Ps. cxlvii. 20.) Alas ! I feel that I am unworthy to prostrate before thee as my God, still less to address thee as my heavenly spouse ; but how consolatory is the thought that they love most, to whom most has been remitted. (*St. Luke vii. 47.*) During thy sacred life thou didst not forbid the greatest sinners to water thy divine feet with tears of fervent love ; never didst thou deny them the happy privilege of aspiring to all that is sweetest and most sublime in the exercise of that heavenly virtue. Behold me then filled with confidence in thee, who hast bowed the heavens to descend on this altar, for no other end than to inflame and consume all hearts, without excepting the least worthy. I approach to implore pardon for my past insensibility, and to ask for myself and all creatures the precious gift of perfect charity. O adorable, eternal Lover of mankind ! why art thou so little loved ? *if thou be a father, where is thy honour ? if thou be a master, where is thy fear ? (Mal. i. 6.)* if thou art a Redeemer, a benefactor, a tender, merciful, disinterested friend, where is the love that is due to thy incomprehensible goodness ? Alas ! I myself have been more guilty,

more ungrateful than all other creatures ; because, more favoured than thousands, thou hast *been jealous for my soul with great jealousy*, (Zach. viii. 2.), and still I have resisted. But, O divine Lord ! at length I feel thy omnipotence, and am persuaded that it is in love thou art peculiarly all ruling and resistless—thou hast mercifully touched my soul and penetrated me with that sacred *refining fire* (Mal. iii. 2.) which thou art come on earth to enkindle. O complete thy triumph, take full possession of my whole soul—give me that enlightened love, which will withdraw me totally from all created objects, and irresistibly persuade me that thou art the most amiable, the most lovely, the most enchanting, the most *beautiful above the sons of men*, (Ps. xliv. 3.)—that penitent love, which will pierce my soul with anguish and regret for my innumerable offences—that ardent love, whose rapturous transports will impel me towards thee, with more force and velocity than fire is carried towards its sphere—that patient love, which will sweeten every labour, that has thee, O sovereign Goodness ! for its object—that constant love—that resigned and uniform love, which will concentrate every thought and wish of my soul in the

perfect accomplishment of thy divine will. But, above all, O my supremely amiable and adorable Jesus! give me that love of union—that actual, fervent love, which will teach me to cleave to thee incessantly in this most sacred host, where thou art peculiarly my possession and treasure, and where *thy name and thy remembrance are the desire of my soul.* (Isa. xxvi. 8.)

XX.

The mercies of the Lord I will sing for ever. Ps. lxxxvii. 1.

Were the infinite mercies of our God as sensibly felt, as gratefully acknowledged, as they are universally experienced, how many thousands would rapturously exclaim with the royal psalmist, that the mercies of the Lord would be the unceasing subject of their fervent praise—how many would crowd into the sanctuaries of their Saviour to lay open their wants before a God, who delights in no other title than that of *the Father of Mercies*, (2 Cor. i. 3.), and to join with the happy spirits, whose heavenly songs will, for eternity, have no other theme than the eternal mercy of their great King! O what sweet peace, what tender confidence, what ardent love, would result

from a thorough practical conviction, that the God whom we serve is far less awful in his majesty, less tremendous in his justice, less invincible in his power, than he is ineffable in his love, *and plenteous in his mercy.* (Ps. cxliv. 8.) Still, among all those whom infinite mercy has redeemed, preserved, pardoned, and daily loads with the choicest graces, how few are those whose confidence in their Creator and Father is in any respect in unison with the tenderness of his mercy towards them. On the contrary, how many victims are immolated to his justice, because, self-condemned, they will not have recourse to that *mercy which is from generation to generation*, not only on those who fear and love him, (St. Luke i. 50.), but even with boundless liberality on those who offend and abandon him. Thousands of infatuated sinners pine away in their iniquities, or run blindly on in the road of perdition, imagining with Cain and Judas that their crimes are too great to be forgiven. O little do they know that heart of mercy which *will cast off*; and even *if he hath cast off*, *will also have mercy according to the multitude of his mercies*, (Lament. iii. 31, 32.)—little do they know the magnitude of that mercy, which has covered

the body of their Redeemer with wounds, which has opened and exhausted his sacred veins, and poured his adorable blood in torrents on earth, to cry to heaven for that mercy, which, through his merits, we have a right to claim. Ah! *How long will they be thus incapable of being cleansed?* (Osee viii. 5.) But, if the view of the cross be not sufficient to banish every shadow of distrust from the minds of all men, whether sinners or just---if they still flee from a God, who, so far from punishing, has himself promised to receive with an increase of tenderness the confident return of a sinner to his arms, *assemble yourselves, be gathered together, O nation not worthy to be loved*, (Soph. ii. 1.), and behold this most sacred sanctuary, the miracle of love, and the treasure of mercy. It is here that the light of mercy shines forth with such dazzling brightness as even to astonish the angels of heaven---it is here that are opened the flood-gates of mercy, and a blessing found out even to abundance. (*Mal. iii. 10.*) This is the sanctuary whose *gates are open continually, and are not shut day nor night*, (Isa. lx. 11.), that in whatever day the sinner shall repent, he may enter confidently, and *reap at the mouth of mercy*. O who can despair when we

contemplate in this life-giving host, a God, a Saviour who so ardently desires to exhibit the riches of his mercy in pardoning the most obdurate sinners, that he orders, not only his angels, but the inanimate works of his hands, to celebrate the day when he *shall bind up the wound of his people, and shall heal the stroke of their wound.* (Isa. xxx. 26.) Return then, sinners of all descriptions, return with confidence to Him *whose mercies are over all his works,* (Ps. cxliv. 9.); but delay not lest he be at length *weary of intreating thee,* (Jer. xv. 6.), lest *the harvest be passed, the summer be ended, and ye be not saved.* (Ibid. viii. 20.)

O my soul! cherished object of a Saviour's love, purchase of his blood, and child of his tenderest mercies! come now and give glory to him, *because he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever.* (Ps. cxvii. 1.) O my soul's dearest Love! my Redeemer! my sovereign Lord! why have I not the voice of angels and men---why have I not the transports of the seraphim, and all the united ardours of the heavenly host, that I may sing to thee a new song of benediction and thanksgiving? But, alas! *what shall I offer to the Lord that is worthy? where-with shall I kneel before that God,* (Mich.

vi. 6.), whose *eyes are too pure to behold evil, and who canst not look on iniquity.* (Heb. i. 13.) O my everlasting Love! miserable as I am, I can make thee an offering most worthy of thy goodness, and grateful to thy heart---I can present thee with a soul loaded with more mercies than would suffice to sanctify any other but myself. O let thy own mercies then praise thee, let them give thee glory, (*Ps. lviii.*), and let my preservation from those torments I have a thousand times deserved, be a standing memorial of thy paternal compassion. With the most lively gratitude I acknowledge that it is thy *mercy* I am *not consumed*---that it is *because* thy *tender mercies have not failed*, (*Lament. iii. 22.*), I am still enabled to address thee as my Father, to hope in thee as my Saviour, and to love thee as the treasure, delight, and happiness of my soul. O why cannot I universally proclaim what I well know from my own happy experience, that even *when thou art angry thou wilt remember mercy*, (*Habac. iii. 2.*)—why cannot I persuade all those, who, like me, have trampled on thy graces, thy blood, and thy love, to detest their iniquity, but to hope without wavering in that mercy where thy *strength is hid*, (*Ibid. 4.*)—to weep over

their crimes, but to flee without delay to a Saviour who never yet broke *the bruised reed*, (Isa. xlii. 3.), or trampled on a soul whom contrition and guilt had penetrated and confounded. For my part, I own, in the face of heaven and earth, that I have merited all the rigours of thy justice,—that so far from being treated as my sins deserved, I experienced even an increase of tenderness, and was spared by my Creator, *as a man spareth his son that serveth him*. (Mal. iii. 17.) What then shall ever induce, what shall ever infatuate me to distrust thy goodness? No; though I should fall again into that abyss from whence thou hast drawn me---though I should relapse into those transgressions which I sovereignly detest, and dread more than hell itself; still would I rise without delay, and return to thee, firmly convinced that the united offences of all men are less than an atom compared with the magnitude of thy mercies; *I know that thou art a gracious and merciful God, patient and of much compassion, and easy to forgive evil*. (Jon. iv. 2.) But, O most merciful Jesus! what is it that deters so many thousands from approaching confidently to a God who died for their salvation, and in whose divine arms they should

not fear, nor be confounded, but should forget the reproach of their youth, and remember no more the shame of their iniquity? (*Isa. liv. 4.*) Surely thou hast offered thy mercies to all, and hast every where proved them to be over all thy works. Ah! *what are those wounds in the midst of thy hands?* (*Zach. xiii. 6.*)—what are those thorns which pierce thy head?—what are those tears which flow from thy eyes, and the sighs which burst from thy adorable heart, but all so many incontestable proofs of thy eternal, liberal, tender, compassionate, exhaustless mercy? Yes, beloved Jesus! thou art mercy's essence, and no where art thou more irresistibly attractive, than in this life-giving host, which is by excellence the gift of thy mercy, *the good thing of thee, the beautiful thing, the corn of the chosen ones and the wine which maketh virgins.* (*Ibid. ix. 17.*) O! it is in this sacred sanctuary, dropping with all the sweetness of mercy, and flowing with the milk of kindness and love, that thou art truly and really *a God who delighteth in mercy*, (*Mich. vii. 18.*), and the more firmly I believe thee to be such, the more ardently I long that all men should view thee in that amiable light, and profit of the superabundant mercy contain-

ed in this adorable sacrament. O divine Jesus ! let thy mercy be upon me according to my hope in thee, and do thou thyself increase this hope and confidence in my soul. May this *mercy* which has *followed me all the days of my life*, (Ps. xx. 6.) accompany me also at the hour of my death, and securely conduct me to that happy land where thy *mercy* shall be *confirmed upon me*, and thy *truth* remain for ever. (Ibid. cxvi. 2.) Amen.



DEVOUT PRAYERS

IN HONOUR OF THE SEVEN DOLOURS OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN.

I.

And Simeon said to Mary--thy own soul a sword shall pierce. St. Luke ii. 54, 35.

O most sacred, most amiable and immaculate Mother of God ! living Temple of the Divinity ! Delight of angels, and Hope of man ! look with compassion on one whom thou knowest to be most specially

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and fervently devoted to thee,—whose refuge and confidence is in thy powerful intercession, and whose hope in life and death is in thy compassionating mercy. O incomparable Virgin! thou art elevated to a sublime height of love, above the conception of created intelligence; but thy solid glory does not so much consist in that privilege, as in the resemblance between thy pure soul and the crucified object of thy love. Thou art not inebriated with the torrent of delights which now overflow thy happy soul, without having been first plunged in a sea of sorrow; thou art not clothed in the resplendent glories of thy dear Son, without having deeply participated in the bitterness of his chalice, and the ignominy of his passion. Permit me, O most afflicted Virgin! to commemorate the moment when, presenting in the temple the *Light of the Gentiles, and the Glory of Israel*, (St. Luke ii. 32.), thy soul was filled with anguish by the inspired prediction, which announced his sufferings, and thus foretold thine. It was not the sorrow prepared for thee which pierced thy soul—it was the anticipated view of the excessive pangs which awaited the adorable Babe thou didst bear in thy arms. But, O Model of true love, and perfect resig-

nation ! with what joy didst thou acquiesce in the will of thy infant God ! with what love didst thou offer thyself to share his ignominies, and be nailed by love to the cross on which he was to expire ! O by thy heroic dispositions on that occasion, obtain for me such perfect resignation to the trials of this life, as will liken me to thee, and endear me to thy Son. *Amen.*

II.

Arise, take the Child and his Mother, and fly into Egypt. St. Matt. ii. 13.

Incomparable Virgin ! Queen of angels ! far more mighty than they in all the energies of love, more prompt in executing the word of the Lord, and *hearkening to the voice of his orders !* (Ps. cii. 20.), permit me to accompany thee in that painful journey into Egypt, whither thou art constrained to flee.---O how was thy maternal heart grieved by the fatigue and universal privations to which thou wert obliged to expose thy beloved Son, without time or abilities to alleviate the pains of an incarnate God, who, for our sakes, became subject to all the weakness and impotence of childhood ! O Mother and perfect follower of that omnipotent Being,

who for men became *obedient unto death, even the death of the cross!* (Phil. ii. 8.), thy sacred heart is dilated by love, therefore dost thou *run in the way of all his commandments.* (Ps. cxviii. 32.) Thou art, in thy flight to a foreign and idolatrous land, deprived of all human comfort; but thou art rich in the possession of heaven's treasure—thou art the bearer of love—thou art borne by love, and art to all ages a perfect model of a soul purified *in the obedience of charity.* (1 Pet. i. 22.) O most sacred Virgin! I ardently conjure thee, by the promptitude, love, and cheerfulness of thy compliance on this occasion—by the tender compassion with which thou didst fold thy divine Babe in thy arms—by the love with which thou didst press him to thy inflamed heart, and labour to shield his sacred body from the inclemency of the weather; to obtain for me that perfect obedience which will speak victories (*Prov. xxi. 28.*) over my domestic enemies, and teach me, after thy example, to have no other food, delight, or desire, than the perfect accomplishment of the divine will.

III.

The child Jesus remained in Jer salem, and his parents knew it not. St. Luke iii. 43.

Now it is, O sacred Model of suffering love, that the sword of sorrow begins to penetrate more deeply into thy soul, and to fill thee with far more bitter anguish than thou hadst hitherto experienced. Thou hast lost thy divine Son :---the Delight of thy soul, the Treasure and Beloved of thy heart, has *turned aside, and is gone*,---thou seekest him, but findeth him not---thou callest, but he does not answer thee. (*Cant. v. 6.*) O most ardent and constant Lover ! thou art afflicted in proportion to the ardour of thy love---the animated transports which impel thee towards the dear object of thy soul's fondest affection, are now become so many agonizing darts, which transfix thy soul, and give ten-fold bitterness to the pangs of separation. Thou grieveest for his loss---thou sighest with vehement desire to behold him once more ; and tremblest lest some involuntary relaxation in thy usual care may have occasioned his departure, or may hinder his

return. *O most beautiful among women!* (Cant. v. 9.), how little cause hast thou to fear! thy heart, that consuming furnace where the flame of love burns without a foreign affection to damp its ardours, must surely be that tabernacle which the Most High has sanctified, (*Ps. xlv. 5.*), and destined for his own beloved sanctuary—thy soul, all fair and spotless, without a shadow of imperfection to sully its immaculate purity, is certainly the residence, repose, and delight of Him *who feedeth among the lilies.* (Cant. vi. 2.) Yes; most amiable Virgin! Jesus is all thine ---he well knows that thou art languishing with love, (*Ibid. v. 8.*), and whether absent or present *his turning is towards thee.* (*Ibid. vii. 10.*) But, unlike those who lose their sovereign Good by sin---who lose him without pain, who seek him without love, and consequently without success, thou beginnest a search which has the most ardent love for its motive and its object. Ah! I will accompany thee; *I will seek him with thee,* (*Ibid. v. 17.*), that through thy powerful assistance and intercession I may find in him all that my soul desires. *O Mother of fair Love!* (*Eecl. xxiv. 24.*), by all the anguish thou

didst feel in the purifying furnace of separation from thy dear Son, obtain for me that perfect love, which will unite me to him and to thee in time and eternity.
Amen.

IV.

And Jesus, bearing his own cross, went forth to that place which is called Calvary.
 St. John xix. 16, 17.

O first and most fervent Disciple of a crucified God! what mind can conceive, what tongue can express the agonising pangs of thy soul when the *Man of sorrows* (Isa. liii. 3.) is first presented to thy view? By what traces dost thou now recognize the Beloved of thy heart, the most *Beautiful above the sons of men!* (Ps. xliv. 3.) Ah most sacred and afflicted Mother! though covered with blood and wounds, thy heart tells thee who he is. In that dejected object of universal insult—in the abused and mangled *outcast of the people*, (Ps. xxi. 7.)—in the destined victim of a cruel and ignominious death, thou recognizest thy own dear and only Son, the blessed fruit of thy womb, and divine centre of all thy affections. O what torrents

of tears fell from thy eyes ! what unnumbered sighs burst from thy heart ! Still, most perfect Model of heavenly patience ! though thy *sorrow is above all sorrow*, and thy *heart mourneth within thee*, (*Jerem. viii. 18.*), yet, far from complaint or murmur, thy anguish is submissive and silent as that of thy Son — thy heart beats in unison with his, and knows not a feeling contrary to the tenderest charity and most lively zeal for the salvation of those who are the immediate cause of thy immeasurable woes. Filled with love, and armed with more than human fortitude, thou accompaniest the world's Redeemer in the last sad journey of his mortal life ; and although forced by brutal violence to follow at a distance, yet thou walkest in the track marked out by his adorable blood. He is exteriorly aided by Simon of Cyrene, yet thou art, in reality, his only assistant in carrying his overwhelming load. O Mother of that *meek Lamb that is carried to be a victim*, (*Jer. ix. 19.*), how eloquently does thy heroic example exhort all men to lighten his cross by unalterable patience in bearing their own ! permit me then to accompany thee to Calvary, that I may learn from thy example, and obtain by thy intercession, such ardent love of the cross,

as will continually animate me to love him without bounds who bore it for my sake, and by voluntary mortification to *fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ.* (Col. i. 24.)

V.

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother. St. John xix. 25.

O Mary ! immaculate Virgin ! fastened by love to the cross of thy Son, pierced with the thorns, transfixed with the nails, and sprinkled *with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled!* (1 Pet. i. 19.), now it is that the martyrs of Jesus receive a model, a queen, a support in thee. O let the most tormented among those happy myriads, now approach and learn from thee to despise their pangs—let *all that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to thy sorrow,* (Lament. i. 12.)—let Christians remember thee and blush at their imaginary difficulties in the way of the cross. O sacred Object of heaven's admiration ! the angels reverence in thee a faithful copy of thy suffering Son, the seraphim behold thee and veil their faces, for one of thy impassioned sighs exceeds

in ardour all their love—yet, alas! cruelly tormented, thou art deprived of every species of consolation human and divine. Ah! *who can heal thee?* (Lament. ii. 13.), who can impart one ray of comfort to thy agonising soul? O crucified Victim of love! by what miracle art thou supported? by what invisible power art thou sustained at the foot of the cross? Disclose to me the inmost recesses of that heart, where, unperceived by men, the tragedy of Calvary is acted anew, that I may share in thy pangs by the tenderest compassion. The Jews, whose inhuman cries, shouts, and blasphemies torture thy soul, know not what they do, but thou knowest and feelest the extent of their crime—thou knowest that they immolate an incarnate God, who thirsts for their salvation—that they pierce the heart which burns with love for its most inveterate tormentors. O Virgin, more than martyr! thou wert instructed at the foot of the cross, and no interior desolation, or exterior insult, could force thee to depart one instant from that painful but salutary school of perfection! I beseech thee, by the reiterated pangs which the dying groans of thy Son caused in thy soul, to obtain for me a tender solid devotion to his adorable passion, that I may study to

die daily to all created objects, and merit to live in Christ at the hour of my dissolution.

VI.

And Joseph of Arimathea came, and took down the body of Jesus. St. John xix. 38.

O most amiable Virgin! prostrate at thy feet, I adore with all the powers of my soul the precious body of my Redeemer, now taken down from the cross and laid in thy arms. Ah! why cannot I reverence that sacred deposit with all the tenderness and lively ardour of thy inflamed and afflicted heart! Permit me at least, to commemorate the unspeakable pangs which rent thy soul, when looking on him *whom they had pierced*, thou didst *mourn for him, as one mourneth for an only son, and grieve over him, as one grieveth for the death of the first born.* (Zach. xii. 10.) With what unutterable agony didst thou embrace his mangled limbs, number his still bleeding wounds, and bedew them all with thy bitter tears. O most afflicted Virgin! didst thou execrate the inhuman barbarity of his cruel tormentors? didst thou accuse of his death the guilty race whose sins, thou

knewest, were his real executioners? No; thy merciful heart is filled with far other sentiments — already dost thou look on mankind as the purchase of a Saviour's blood, the objects of his eternal predilection and dying solicitude. O most sacred Virgin! I feel that, in committing us to thy charge, he has not left us orphans—we are authorized by his own divine words to look on thee as our mother, and consequently to expect the most precious graces from thy powerful intercession. Obtain for me then, I beseech thee, through the maternal tenderness thou didst conceive for all men at the foot of the cross, the inestimable happiness of frequent and worthy communion. May I, through thy powerful intercession, and after thy example, receive that same adorable body which was lifeless in thy arms, and is deprived in the eucharist of all sensible motion, with the tenderest love, the most profound adoration, and such a lively remembrance of his bitter passion, as will procure for me an abundant share in his inexhaustible merits.

VII.

And there was in the place where he was crucified, a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein they laid Jesus. St. John xix. 41, 42.

O Queen of sorrows! thou didst not long enjoy the sad consolation of beholding Him, who, in life and death, was the sovereign and only object of thy love:—that immaculate body, which unnumbered wounds had rendered more dear, is now torn from thy arms—it is laid in the sepulchre, and with it are buried the joys and consolations which the view of the sacred humanity had so often infused into thy soul. O incomparable Virgin! now dost thou weep, and thy *eyes run down with water, because the comforter, the relief of thy soul is far from thee.* (*Lament. i. 16.*) Thou hast beheld the sufferings of his divine infancy; thou hast seen and adored the obscurity of his hidden life; thou hast followed him in spirit through the laborious sufferings of his public ministry; thou hast witnessed with unspeakable anguish the cruel torments which terminated his blessed life—from his first infant cries in the crib at Bethlehem to his last

sigh on the cross, thou hast borne his sorrows, and carried his griefs. O sacred model of heavenly fortitude, and divine patience ! what is it that sustains thee now ? dost thou desire to suffer still greater pangs ? Yes, thou wilt resemble thy Beloved in all things,—with him thou wert a victim of suffering through life, and like him thou wilt expire a martyr of love. O love ! most sacred flame ! in the person of Mary thou art truly proved to be stronger than death, (*Cant.* viii. 6.), for thou hast supported her in torments sufficient to destroy a thousand lives. O seraphic Spouse of the spirit of love ! shall I presume to call thee my mother, or to implore that protection of which my tepidity renders me most unworthy ? O Mary ! thou art to me the best gift of a dying Saviour ; and let my sins be what they may, my hope in thee is the last blessing I will relinquish. Obtain for me then, through thy seven sacred dolours, and through the abundant share thou hadst in my redemption, such ardent love of God, that I may no longer live, but that Jesus alone may live in me—such a spirit of prayer, and union with God, that my life may henceforward be hidden with Christ in God—and such ardent, solid, and practical devotion to-

wards thee, as may procure me the great gift of final perseverance, and a refuge in thy most sacred heart at the hour of my death. O Mary ! happy are they who confidently hope in thee, *for the mountains shall be moved, and the hills shall tremble,—but the mercy of God shall not depart from those* (Isa. liv. 10.) who are sincerely devoted to his ever blessed Mother.



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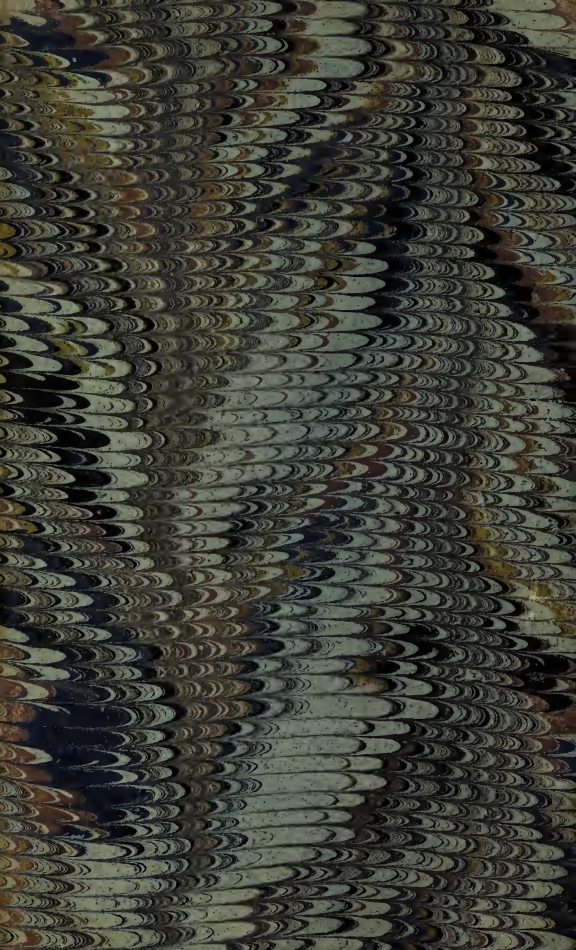
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"He hath opened his hands to the needy, and stretched out his hands to the poor. Prov. xxi.

"Our life, our sweetness, and our hope, to Thee
We fly for refuge in our misery,
Thy Son, our Saviour is with thee, and we
That Saviour seek.

In our last moments, Blessed Mary plead:
For us, poor sinners, deign to intercede,
Jesus and Mary be these words decreed,
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